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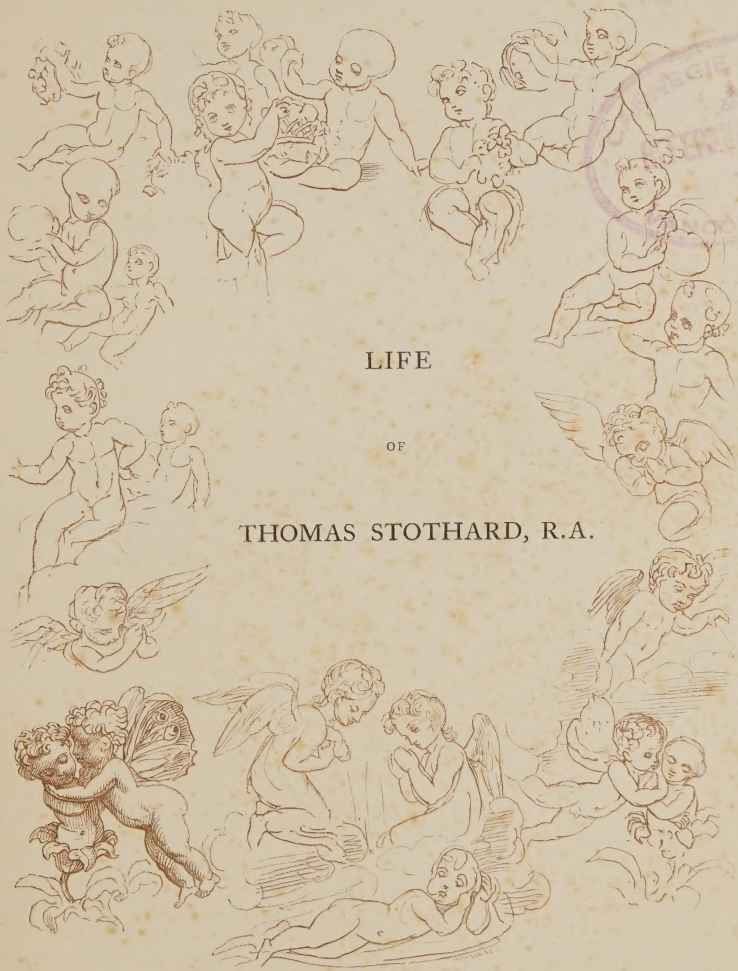













LIFE

OF

THOMAS STOTHARD, R.A.



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Thos Stothard





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LIFE  
OF  
THOMAS STOTHARD, R.A.

WITH PERSONAL REMINISCENCES

By MRS. BRAY,

Author of "The Borders of the Tamar and the Tavy," "Memoirs of Charles A. Stothard, F.S.A.,"  
"Trelawny," "Trials of the Heart," &c., &c.

WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS FROM HIS WORKS.

LONDON:

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.

1851.



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PRINTERS EXTRAORDINARY TO THE QUEEN,  
WHITEFRIARS.

## ADVERTISEMENT.



IN the year 1836, two articles of mine, entitled "Reminiscences of Stothard," were published in the May and June numbers of Blackwood's Magazine. In 1845, Mr. Alfred Stothard, son of the late historical painter, and himself a medallist of great ability, passed some little time with us at Tavistock. During his visit, he expressed his regret that he had not been made acquainted with my intention to write the articles on his father, as he could have furnished me with some additional information. These, therefore, I revised, corrected, and re-modelled; and embodied in them not only the particulars I received from so authentic a source, but added also many from my own recollections; till at length, the work grew so much upon me, that I determined to throw it into a more biographical form.

After I had thus enlarged and completed my task, it was suggested to me by Mr. Murray, that it would be desirable, if possible, to obtain some original letters of Stothard. In the hope of being enabled to do this, I applied to Mr. Alfred Stothard,

who kindly lent all the papers he had of his late father. These principally consisted of letters to and from his wife; with some rude drafts of others to various persons on matters of business connected with his profession; and two very briefly written diaries of journeys to Edinburgh and Derbyshire, whilst engaged in his pursuits. All these documents I most carefully examined.

I found the letters addressed to Mrs. Stothard evinced kind and good feelings as a husband and a father; but, for the greater part, so much were they of a private nature, as to contain little information for the public. From these, therefore, I selected only a few extracts, to show how strong were his domestic affections.

Respecting letters and papers of a more general or professional character, I grieve to say, I could find but few that were in a state for publication, or would have possessed any interest with the reader. Most of them were fragments, unfinished drafts, or rude memoranda, and usually without dates; some with so many obliterations, and in so imperfect a state, that they could not be clearly understood, and thus were useless. I have, therefore, been compelled to give but very few.

In justice to myself I have stated this; as it will, in some measure, account for a want of exact regularity as to the order in which they are placed. Indeed, I have frequently felt the difficulty, in some instances the impossibility, of following the principal events



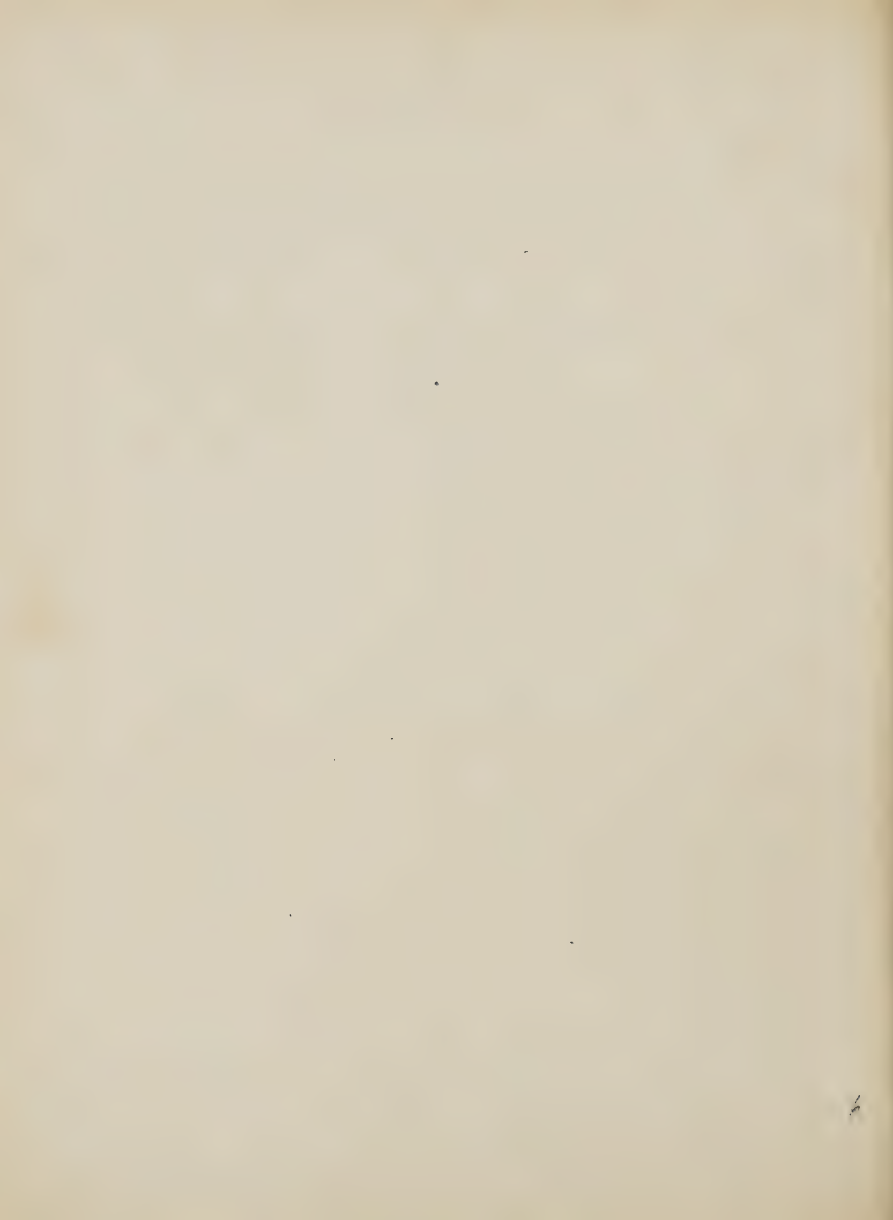
of Stothard's life in strict chronological order. Those who were most intimately acquainted with the early part of his career are no longer living ; and, from natural modesty and reserve, he seldom, if ever, talked about himself.

The plan of giving illustrations from the works of a great painter, with some account of his life, originated with Mr. Leslie, R.A., in his *Memoirs of Constable* ; Mr. Murray has, in some measure, adopted it as the precedent and example in the style of illustrating the present volume. To that eminent artist I am indebted for two or three characteristic anecdotes of his brother Academician, and for the extract from a lecture which he recently delivered at the Royal Academy respecting the productions of Stothard's pencil.

To Mr. Carpenter, of the British Museum, my thanks are due for his great kindness and attention in enabling me to profit by the engravings from the works of Stothard, under his care, in the print-room of that National Institution. To Miss Denman, Mr. Rogers, and Mr. Windus, I am also indebted for having most obligingly allowed some of his designs, in their possession, to be copied for these pages.

ANNA ELIZA BRAY.

THE VICARAGE, TAVISTOCK,  
November, 1851.





REMINISCENCES  
OF  
THOMAS STOTHARD,  
R.A.



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From the Illustrations to Milton.





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## INTRODUCTION.



THE writer's early and long connection with Stothard—By what circumstance first known to him—A club of oddities of the old school—Introduction to the great painter—His willingness to assist the young student in Art—Stothard as a critic—His painting-room—Collection of butterflies—His remarks on the harmony of colour seen in them—Fondness for flowers—Practice of sketching them—Stothard's countenance expressive; its general character—Anecdote of his impartiality as a judge of Art.

THE circumstance of having been not only intimately acquainted, and for many years, with the great and good man whose name stands at the head of these pages, but also, in early life, having been the wife and widow of his lamented son Charles, first induced me to throw together a few reminiscences respecting him. These, I trust, will be found of some interest, not only to those who personally knew him, but to many who were his admirers as an artist, and who feel desirous to learn what they can of the private as well as public life of such eminent persons as have done honour to their country by the exertion of their genius, their influence, and their moral worth.

In all these respects the name of Stothard deserves veneration; since he was excellent, not less as a man than as a painter: and as

my acquaintance with him commenced by a circumstance that evinced a kind and amiable trait in his character, I trust I may be pardoned in relating it here; the more so, as it will occupy but a brief space in my narrative, and will not, I hope, be found tedious to my readers. It may also be of some use to the young student in art, when he sees with how much good-nature and consideration the really eminent encourage the efforts of industry, and will condescend to advise and direct those who are anxious to follow a well-regulated course in their studies and pursuits.

In early youth I had a great fondness for drawing, which had never been cultivated by any instruction; and I attempted to paint a picture (in miniature) without knowing a single rule of Art. It is almost needless to say it was a very wretched performance; but it showed a love of the Art, and my dear father (who had some taste and skill in the Arts himself, though not in heads and figures, to which I inclined) fancied that he saw in my "Madonna and Child"—for such was the ambitious subject—more than any one else could have discovered, namely, a promise of talent beyond the ordinary run in young persons who have a wish to excel in painting. No critic would be very severe upon a parent for such an error as this.

My dear father viewed my attempt with great satisfaction; and it so happened that, on the very day I had presented it finished before him, he was going to dine in the neighbourhood of St. James's, at a house where he used to meet some acquaintances



of the old school, who had formed themselves into a club. This little society contained so many oddities, that, had Addison been living in these latter times, he might have found in it many a hint for the richness of his humour in his own picture of a club recorded in the Spectator.

One of the members was a gentleman in the army; a Captain Watkins (for my father's club, like his just named, had a Captain in it), who had the honour of being brother-in-law to Thomas Stothard, the great historical painter; and the subject of the following reminiscences. This gentleman was of the party on the day to which I have already referred, when my father, who usually filled the president's chair, being seated therein, and invested with all due honour, after giving the King and the Church, drew from his pocket, with a much higher eulogium than it deserved, my very poor and juvenile performance of the "Madonna and Child." How complacent are men and critics when seated round a bottle of wine! None of the company knew much about the Arts; my father was by far the best judge of the party; but he looked at the painting through the spectacles of parental affection, and those are never formed of diminishing glasses. The picture was handed round, and by all present pronounced, *nem. con.* (the youth of the artist considered), to be indicative of a taste deserving encouragement and cultivation; and Captain Watkins concluded his remarks upon it, by saying—"Let me be of use: let me introduce picture and artist to my brother-in-law, Mr. Stothard, the Academician, and hear what he

has to say about it ; he is ever ready to do all he can to benefit a student or lover of the Arts."

My father was pleased with the proposal, and asked the Captain to dinner. He came as invited ; the appointment was speedily made to wait on Mr. Stothard ; and thus, reader, to my father's club was I indebted for my introduction to our great historical painter, at his own house in Newman Street ; where, for the first time, I saw our English Raphael seated in his painting-room, and busied over his fine picture of "Hector and Andromache."

"HAMLET.—Methinks I see him now !

"HORATIO.—O ! where, my Lord ?

"HAMLET.—In my mind's eye, Horatio."

So may I say of Stothard, for well do I remember him at that first meeting. I remember the morning I prepared to go to him ; how I looked at my poor picture, this way, that way, in the glass, out of the glass ; how I tried to look it into something much better than it was, before it appeared at the bar of judgment. I carried it in my hand all the way we were rumbling along ; it was shut up in a small box, with a sliding lid, that had been my grandmother's. The box was a piece of family pride, for it had originally belonged to Queen Anne, and was traditionally said to have been given by her Majesty to my great-aunt ; with a little old-fashioned mirror, covered at the back with chased silver monkeys. I never shall forget the feeling of trepidation with which I drew out that lid of my grandmother's box, to show the picture to Mr. Stothard ; for

I can truly say, that I did not think my performance to be the wonder it had been pronounced to be by the company at my father's club. But Stothard was not the man to discourage or dishearten any one. In him, I soon found, as in all truly great men, that there was a good-nature about him towards the student which soon dispelled all fear, and made the young aspirant feel perfectly at ease in his presence.

He did not expect to meet with great things from little means ; he did not criticise on a beginner as he would on a master. He considered the attempts of an uneducated artist as attempts only, and estimated them not for what they were, but for what they indicated the hand that had achieved them might become under a judicious schooling in art. Stothard, in this respect, resembled some great men I could name in literature, who are ever more ready to commend and to encourage than the little critics, those I mean who deem themselves critics, and who often possess not one essential requisite for true criticism ; the first qualification for such an office being (as Stothard himself has not unfrequently remarked) a thorough acquaintance with the subject on which the critic is to sit in judgment. To throw a stone is an easy thing, but to hit the mark requires a practised eye, as well as a true hand.

The generosity, the kindness, and the manly judgment (never flattering nor needlessly severe) of Stothard as a critic are well known to all who sought his opinion or his advice, with a view to their own benefit. In his disposition there was not even the

shadow of envy. He loved the art in which he excelled; he admired it for its own excellence, and by whom it was produced was to him indifferent. His own sons never received a flattering commendation from him because of their affinity; nor did any personal opposition ever draw from him a disparaging remark on the works of another, if they deserved praise for their intrinsic merit.\* It was to such a critic and such a man that I was introduced by Captain Watkins.

The great artist was in his painting-room when we arrived. That room in which, as a more than ordinary favour, we were permitted to take a peep. The painting-room was tolerably large, it possessed the very necessary advantage of an excellent light, and was so filled with pictures, drawings, portfolios, books, prints, and all the *et cetera* of a studio, that there was not, literally, a vacant chair for a visitor, who was favoured by being admitted into the

\* An instance of this was related to me by Mr. Alfred Stothard himself. In 1823 he was a competitor for the premiums awarded by the Royal Academy in two several departments of art. He was successful in gaining both. These premiums were awarded by the votes of the Academicians. In the Bas-relief competition, ten specimens were laid before the members. The celebrated sculptor, Mr. Flaxman, inquired of Mr. Stothard for whom he proposed voting, and added, "of course for your son." Mr. Stothard said, in answer, "In a matter of this nature, my son is not my son; it must not be a thing of course.

His bas-relief does not seem to me to be of so bold a character as any one of the other nine. I shall not vote for him." "Before you say so," replied Mr. Flaxman, "come with me and closely examine it, and you will see it is executed more in the style for which the competition has been proposed (a bas-relief in low relief) than any other, and deserves the premium." Mr. Flaxman then led Mr. Stothard to the model, and they examined it together. The premium was awarded to the son of the latter; and much the same thing happened in respect to the other prize he gained in another branch, that of medal engraving.

sanctum sanctorum. In some drawers in the same apartment there was, beautifully preserved, a most gorgeous collection of butterflies, collected by Stothard himself, in the fields near Norwood and Highgate. These, he said, were not only beautiful objects in themselves, but that they afforded fine studies for the arrangement and harmony of colour ; for nothing could exceed those to be found on the wings of these insects. Stothard was a great observer of the harmony of colour in the order of nature. Flowers were, likewise, favourite objects with him, for the same reason ; and he generally had his china jars filled with some most beautiful nosegays, that he was in the habit of choosing himself, and purchasing in Covent Garden market, early in the spring and summer mornings. He showed us some masterly sketches in oil, that he had painted hastily, as any choice flower in these nosegays had happened to strike his fancy. He told me that sketching flowers in this way, from nature, was a good method to acquire facility of pencilling ; and, by such advice, I afterwards practised it in oil.

On first seeing Stothard on that memorable day, I was much struck with the marked and impressive character of his head. The brows, that deeply overshadowed the eyes, were replete with thought. He looked like a man you would expect to find abstracted and often absent in his manner ; but there was a gentle and benevolent, as well as intellectual, expression in his countenance, that was exceedingly pleasing. As a whole, his was, strictly speaking, a philosophical head : for it possessed that union of



thoughtfulness and repose, which shows how much the passions and feelings of the man are in constant subjection to his reason. His eye was very fine, and the mouth indicated great sweetness of temper—his was a countenance that invited trust, it was so thoroughly expressive of a guileless simplicity of heart,—and such a heart he possessed ! for no man ever more deserved the praise conveyed in that celebrated line—

“ In wit a man, simplicity a child ! ”



Alfred in the Danish Camp: from the original in the possession of Thomas Windus, Esq.

## CHAPTER I.

Parentage and Birth of Stothard—Sent to nurse at Acomb—The old store-room and its attraction—Brought to London; placed at school—His father dies—Apprenticed to a pattern draughtsman—Designs from Homer and Spenser—His master dies—He continues with the widow—Makes sketches for her—Two gentlemen call on her—Results of the meeting—His early friends—Apprenticeship expires—Employed on the *Novellist's Magazine*—Exhibits his first picture—Becomes a student in Maiden Lane—His love of literature—Rambles in North Wales—Sketches from nature—Boating excursion—Falls in love—Marries—Alderman Boydell—Goes to a Mansion House Ball—Elected an Associate of the Royal Academy—His progress and works.



Initial letter (These presents) for the Policies of the Amicable Insurance Company, 1768.

HE father of Thomas Stothard was a native of Stutton, near Tadcaster, in Yorkshire; and though of an old and good family, so much reduced in circumstances, that (like the father of Sir Thomas Lawrence) he followed no higher calling than keeper of an inn. His wife, whose maiden name, I believe, was Reynolds, was a native of Shrewsbury; highly respectable both in

her family and connexions. In 1750, they removed to London; where, during the few years that the elder Stothard lived, he carried on his business in Long Acre, with considerable success;

so that at his death he was enabled to leave some provision for his family.

His only child, Thomas, was born in London on the 17th of August, 1755.\* In a biographical sketch where, like the present, the subject of it is more endowed by nature than distinguished by birth, it is often attempted (though not always very satisfactorily) to raise him by a reference to the dignity of his ancestors. In this instance, however, there is no need to have recourse either to fancy or tradition, in order to bring our artist within the pale of gentle blood and honourable lineage, as the following facts will attest.

On a failure of heirs male, in a not very distant branch, Thomas Stothard stood as the heir-at-law to an old family mansion and a large landed property, I believe, in Gloucestershire. Many years ago that failure took place, and he was advised to assert his claims, and take the usual legal measures in such a case. But he not only felt a great repugnance to disturb the tranquillity of his own mind,

\* A doubt existed respecting the birth-place of Stothard; as some of his family believed it was Acomb, near York: the question has been set at rest by Mr. Peter Cunningham, who took the trouble to search the registers of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, the parish in which the greater part of Long Acre lies. There he found the entry of Stothard's birth and baptism. With a copy of this, he had the kindness to send me some few interesting memoranda concerning the childhood of Stothard, which his father, the late Mr. Allan Cunningham, made on the 6th of July 1830, being the day he received such information from Stothard himself.

In the British Museum two documents

are preserved respecting him; one of them is nothing more than a slip of paper, on which he wrote a few particulars of his early life, at the request of the late Mr. Balmanno, in 1829, and in which, from failure of memory at so advanced an age, (being then in his seventy-sixth year) he made some slight errors and omissions. The other document is a short account of him that appeared in some magazine several years ago, to a copy of which Stothard annexed corrections and additions on the margin; in the latter were a few particulars not stated by him to Mr. Allan Cunningham; and also a few discrepancies, but not of so material a nature as to require special notice.

and the delightful indulgence of his imagination at the ease, with the turmoil and hazard and vexatious delays of a lawsuit, but a generous motive also prevailed with him; as, at the time he was so much urged to proceed in the affair, he remarked, with the accustomed simplicity of his character, "that he should not like to disturb with law the three maiden ladies who had the property in possession." Burke would not have said that a spirit of chivalry was dead in England, could he have heard this anecdote of Stothard. To return from this digression.

Thomas being a delicate child, his father, anxious about his health, sent him, when five years old, to his uncle at York, who placed him "under the care of an old lady, a good woman and a staunch presbyterian." She lived in the little village of Acomb, near that city. "There," said Stothard, "I grew stronger. She had two sons in the Temple, London, who sent her a present of some of the heads of Houbraken, framed and glazed; likewise an engraving of the blind Belshazzar, by Strange; and some religious pictures from the unrivalled graver of the same artist. I looked often and earnestly at those productions; for the old lady admitted me freely into her room, and seemed pleased with my admiration of them. I gazed till a love of Art grew within me, and a desire to imitate what was on her walls. I got bits of paper and pencils, and made many attempts. I could see that my hand was improving, and I had sketched some things not amiss, when, at eight years old, I was removed to Stutton, the birth-place of my father. Before this, I should have mentioned that my father, pleased with my attempts, had sent me boxes of colours, which I knew so little how to use, that I applied to a house-painter for some mixed paint, which he gave me in an oyster-shell, and the first man I painted was in black.

I had no examples ; you know how necessary they are ; Literature may be taught by words, Art must come through signs." Such was the account given by this eminent man concerning his childhood, to Mr. Allan Cunningham, in 1830. The following circumstances respecting an old picture which also made a strong impression on Stothard's infant mind, whilst at Acomb, were communicated to me by his son Alfred, who assured me that he received them from his father's own lips. They probably occurred at an earlier period than that of the present of the engravings to the old lady, which he attempted to "imitate," or copy.

It appears that Stothard's nurse at Acomb was a widow, named Stainburn,\* who lived in an antiquated farm-house, and kept a day-school to aid her small means.

From the earliest period of his childhood, Thomas was of fo quiet and docile a spirit, that the good widow at Acomb delighted in showing him any little kindness in her power, which, however, was but limited. It principally consisted in granting one of two very opposite indulgences ; that of affording him, occasionally, the company of a little boy of his own age, who, like himself, was meek and gentle in disposition, and to whom he was much attached ; or, an admission to an old store-room in the house, with a certain portion of the contents of which his mind associated its earliest impressions ; and this, it is not improbable, led to the first dawn or manifestation of his extraordinary genius. When his good-natured nurse gave little Tommy the choice of one of the

\* Her name is stated by Stothard in his marginal notes in the old magazine. May not his recollections of the good widow of Acomb, and her day-school of little rustics,

have been depicted in one of his very early and beautiful designs (which was engraved) from Shenstone's Schoolmistress ?



above-named enjoyments, he would generally give the preference to the store-room.

And what was the attraction it possessed for one of his tender years? Simply this; there hung in it an old picture, opposite to



*The Schoolmistress; an illustration of Shenstone's poem.*

which stood a small low stool; seated on this, the child would remain for hours together in solitude, contemplating something which laid hold of the spirit within him: as his insatiable eye passed from one point to another of the old painting with unwearied

delight; and there would he sit until the door opened, and his nurse called him to supper and to bed.

In after life it is somewhat singular, that though Stothard dwelt much on this incident of his early days, he had no recollection of the matter, nor even of the subject of the picture, which had constituted the charm of his childhood. But the impression it made on his young mind proved indelible; and its character, in point of art, was never forgotten.

When eight years old, Thomas being still delicate in constitution, was again removed to the care of two kind aunts, who were very fond of him, at Stutton; and was daily sent to school at Tadcaster. When he was in his thirteenth year, his father visited his native place; and on his return to London, took his son with him, and placed him at a genteel boarding school, at Ilford in Essex, where they professed to teach all the languages and accomplishments; there he was half-starved; and there, he used to say, he learned to dance of the father of that wonder of pantomimic action—Grimaldi. Thomas had not been more than a year at Ilford, before his father died. The latter for some time had been in a precarious state of health, but, being fond of angling, he went, rather imprudently perhaps, on a fishing excursion to Colnbrook. He caught cold whilst engaged at that sport; and returning to the village, was seized with so sudden and violent an illness, that in two or three days he was a corpse. He was buried in the neighbouring church-yard of Langleigh in 1770, as the stone on his grave still attests. He left some provision for his widow, and twelve hundred pounds in the funds for his son. On the loss of his father, the boy was taken from school, and lived at home with his mother, who, in order to be near an aged aunt, took up her residence at Stepney Green.

Thomas having displayed, before the death of his father, such a decided fondness for drawing, his mother thought it would be best to place him in some way of life where it would be required. In this determination, she evinced so much sense and observation, that I doubt not she was a woman of more than ordinary good understanding. She consulted with her friends, and as brocaded dresses were then much in fashion, at fifteen years of age Thomas was apprenticed to a draftsman of patterns for such silks. His master's residence was in Spital-square, the term of the apprenticeship seven years.

It was not till about two years before the expiration of his indentures, that flowered silks lost their vogue, when the business of drawing for them became slack and unprofitable, and Thomas, consequently, had less to do; yet, from the first, every leisure moment he could find, he devoted to the improvement of his mind and his fancy in his own way. His master, observing that the lad spent his hours of an evening in study, not in drawing from the patterns, but in making designs, principally from Homer's Iliad and Spenser's Faery Queen, indulged him by allowing him to paint in oil from these compositions. In his sketches he delighted in battle-pieces, slightly washing them in with Indian ink, in order to give them some degree of effect; these were mostly made on the leaves of an old account-book. Some of these early designs are still in the possession of his son Alfred, who tells me that they indicate a taste and style formed in the school of Mortimer, a painter of much imagination, who was considered the Salvator of his day.

The master, who, to the honour of his memory be it spoken, thus saw and encouraged these dawning efforts of genius, died

before Stothard was out of his time. Early difficulties seemed to open upon him, for the widow decided on carrying on the business at a period when there was a very uncertain prospect of success. Her youthful apprentice did his best to serve her, and was as remarkable for the steadiness of his conduct and the sweetness of his disposition, as when he won the heart of the nurse of his infancy to open to him the treasures of the store-room. After the work of the day was done, it was still his custom to read for awhile Homer, or Spenser, or any good book that he could procure, and then to indulge in sketching designs that were the offspring of his own imagination, and frequently illustrative of what he had just read. By an overruling Providence, these youthful flights of fancy were made the first step to his remarkable career, and his future eminence.

He ever spoke of his mistress in terms of grateful esteem, and his good conduct had secured for him her most sincere regard. Whilst he was thus engaged in sketching of an evening, she would often watch his hand, and asked him to give her one or two of his drawings, that she might place them for an ornament over her mantel-piece, in the best parlour. Her wish was granted, and the sketches were hung up.

Not long after, two gentlemen called at her house: one of them to give her a commission in the way of business; and, whilst he was talking to her, the other gentleman amused himself with examining the sketches over the mantel-piece. His attention being completely absorbed by them, his friend came up and looked also. On hearing the astonishment expressed by the former at their style and execution, the mistress of the house felt such a pride in her youthful apprentice, that she exclaimed, "Sir, you are admiring

my lad's work. That is the way in which he occupies himself every evening." "Does he so?" replied the stranger; "pray let me see him."

Thomas was then introduced, and the person who had so admired his designs over the chimney-piece drew from his pocket a book. This he placed in the hands of the youth, (who stood before him not a little abashed by hearing his own commendations) and begged him to read it carefully; and when he met with a subject which struck his fancy, to make a design for it in Indian ink. He then took his leave, saying that he would call again at the end of a week. The book (a novel) was read, and instead of one, *three* designs were executed and ready for the gentleman; who, true to his time and word, called again. The drawings were examined and approved; half-a-guinea was put into his hand; and Stothard's future lot was decided.

The stranger was no other than the well-known Mr. Harrison, the editor (and I believe proprietor) of the *Novelist's Magazine*; published many years ago, and long before that series, edited by Mrs. Barbauld, with a critique by herself appended to each work.

When Stothard was about twenty years old, he formed an intimacy with Samuel Shelly, who, some years after, became celebrated as a miniature painter. Also with an artist of the same class, Mr. Darcey.\* Another of his friends was a Mr. Scarlett, who drew very beautifully, and subsequently became a clerk in the Bank of England. These young men were of great assistance to

\* Mr. Darcey was the father of the late General Darcey, of the Royal Engineers, who, many years ago, accompanied the embassy to Persia, and brought home with

him a most beautiful series of his own drawings, illustrative of the Court and the people of that remote country.

each other in the several branches of art they pursued. Whatever was taken in hand, or if any new attempt was made to facilitate a progress in study, by any one of their number ; it was imparted to the others and became a subject of emulation and discussion among them. For a time, at least, their studies might almost be said to be in common.

At the expiration of his apprenticeship, Stothard's mother had apartments at Bethnal Green, where he resided with her ; to use his own words, " studious of the art of painting, and adding a little to my narrow income, by now and then painting some small family portraits amongst my acquaintances." Whilst he lived with his mother, they visited Shrewsbury together, the place of her birth ; and thence made an excursion into North Wales for ten days.



Peter Wilkins : Youwarka towing the Boat. From the *Novellist's Magazine*, published 1783.

Stothard now bade adieu to all thoughts of making drawings for brocaded silks. In 1778 he paid a visit to his friend Darcey, then living at Portsmouth ; and beginning his career, as an artist, successfully in that place. It is not improbable that this visit might



have confirmed him in a previously half-formed resolution to do as Darcey did, and adopt art as a profession. At all events, on his return to town, he no longer continued to reside with his mother, but, in company with his friend Shelly, took lodgings in the Strand. It seems that at this period he managed to subsist on the interest of his twelve hundred pounds, vested for him by his father in the funds, with, as he stated, such additions as he could now and then gain by painting portraits.

Although there can be no question that the spark of encouragement first struck out by Harrison kindled the flame of emulation in the breast of young Stothard, which gave expansion to a boundless power of imagination, and led the way to his eventually becoming the greatest historical painter this country ever produced, yet it does not appear that he was regularly employed on the *Novelist's Magazine* till July, 1780; but, from that period to 1783, he was much engaged in the illustration of books. Another important consequence attendant on his connexion with Harrison, was that of introducing beautiful illustrations as an accompaniment to the popular literature of England; and in this respect he was destined to become the father of the British school. The designs made by this eminent man for these publications, the early volumes of which have become exceedingly scarce, are still the admiration, not only of the learned in Art, but of every one having a heart alive to Nature, and capable, even in a remote degree, of estimating the highest order of poetic composition. It will surprise modern collectors, who now give almost any price that may be demanded for these early drawings, to learn how little he received for them. Stothard states, in some old memoranda of accounts found in his own handwriting, that he made one

hundred and forty-eight designs for the *Novelist's Magazine*, at one guinea each; \* that for twenty-six designs for the *Poetical Magazine* he had the same rate of payment; that for twenty theatrical frontispieces (and these were always portraits of the chief actors and actresses of the day) he received seven shillings each; and that for every separate border or vignette his remuneration was six shillings!



Mrs. Jordan in the character of  
Priscilla Tomboy.

It is uncertain whether it was before or after he lived with Shelly, that he exhibited his first picture (*A Holy Family*) at the Society of Artists; but I have seen it stated by himself, that soon after he did so, he was admitted as a student at Maiden Lane; where (before the establishment of the Royal Academy at Somerset House) the artists held their meetings, and the young men drew from the living model and from the antique. Moser (the father of the beautiful flower-painter, afterwards Mrs. Lloyd) and Wilson, the landscape-painter, were then the librarians of this rising institution.

Mr. Leslie the Royal Academician, who was on terms of intimate acquaintance with Stothard, and highly estimated both his genius and his moral worth, says, concerning this period of our artist's career, that in early life he was frequently at the house of the President, Sir Joshua Reynolds, as indeed were any of the students of the Academy

\* These exquisite productions are now in the collection of Mr. Windus, of Tottenham Green.

who were desirous of benefitting by his advice and conversation, for Sir Joshua kindly allowed young artists to call on him early in the morning before he had himself commenced painting. He criticised their works; and, as Mr. Oliver, who was at that time a student, told Mr. Leslie, Sir Joshua's manner was, as Goldsmith described



The Exhibition-room of the Royal Academy in 1780.

it, "gentle, complying, and bland." Stothard participated in these great advantages, and likewise, when a student, had the benefit of occasionally receiving advice from Wilson.

Stothard's method of study was peculiarly his own; he adopted

not the practice so general with the students, to sit down and draw from a single figure for six or eight weeks. He would place himself opposite to it, and in a small sketch-book would make a careful outline in pen and ink, about five inches in height. He said that he had recourse to this method, because it obliged him well to consider the lines and the proportions before they were drawn, and that thus they became strongly impressed upon the memory. He disapproved the practice of rubbing out, and maintained that an eye and a hand well trained in making pen and ink outlines would be characterised by truth, carefulness, and a good flow of line; in short, would be masterly.

Having in less than an hour's time thus taken one view of the figure before him, he would change his position so as to command a different view of it; and then, being especially careful to mark the change of contour in his subject, he would begin another sketch, and thus continue to work till he produced seven or eight drawings of the same figure. He frequently remarked, that any one who adopted this method of study would, after a little practice, be surprised by the knowledge he had attained. At the same time, he would by no means have the student neglect light and shade, and rounding well the figure: but truth of outline, in its varied forms, was most essential; and, after having acquired it, he might pass with safety to the living model, as the imperfections of nature would be immediately discovered and corrected by the knowledge previously gained.

Stothard was ever a close observer of nature; but it was nature in action that he most studied and admired; and thought that, however good might be the design or the conception of a picture, (frequently displayed with freedom in the original sketch,) it was

often spoilt by presenting, in the figures which composed it, all the stiffness of the lay figure, and all the rigidity and fixed attitude of the living model, from which the artist worked. He would remark, that action was momentary,—it could not be fixed; to be well expressed, it must be caught at once by the mind. It is generally known that he never painted from a model. Even at Burleigh House, where his figures, on the grand staircase, are nearly eight feet in height, not one in any of the groups was painted from a model; and these rank amongst the finest and noblest productions of his pencil.\*

It must also be stated, that, at an early period, he studied much Albert Durer, in whose works he delighted; more especially in his draperies.

From a very early age, Stothard was an assiduous student. As we have seen, he had received little or no instruction in the ordinary branches of knowledge; for his short schooling at Ilford, where, under a hard master, the boys were flogged to make them hold their tongues, lest they should prate to their friends at home of the starvation they suffered at school, could not be considered as any education at all. But his want of regular and proper teaching does but raise him the more in our estimation, when we consider through what impediments he broke, and made his own way to

\* An eminent artist now living, when painting a large historical picture, requested Mr. Alfred Stothard to beg his father to come and give his opinion of its merits. He expressed a wish that he should come whilst the living model was standing; observing, that he knew artists preferred this method when they were about to make

remarks on a work in hand. The gentleman who made this request, on being informed that the painter whose criticism he was desirous to obtain, never used a model, and disapproved the practice, expressed his astonishment; exclaiming, "Then he stands alone; I can now understand how it is all Stothard's works are so graceful."

honourable distinction. Perhaps after all it is not so much to be regretted, that a mind such as his was left to educate itself; and he never lost any opportunity of improvement in that course which was of his own choosing. He read all the standard authors, in poetry or prose, that he could procure, in his own language; and though his mind was more intent on the subject than the words, and he had not perhaps a quick eye or ear for them, (for he sometimes spelt carelessly; and correct orthography, in his day, was not thought to be so necessary as in our own,) yet was he fond of writing.\* From an early period, almost to the close of his life, he copied into little books,—poems, anecdotes from history, letters from friends, or anything that struck him; and wherever he went, generally kept a brief journal of his excursion or his tour. I have seen one little book entirely filled by the copies he made of letters from his son Charles; another with a whole series written by some young man to his father, a friend of his, during a journey abroad. Another small MS. volume was filled by references to Greek, Roman, and English history; and a vast collection of facts and dates, that he had gleaned from various biographical dictionaries and other sources, still in the possession of his son, was formed into a manuscript book, as a foundation for a dictionary which he once proposed himself to write of the Lives of the Painters. It was evident in all this how much he delighted in study; indeed nothing seemed to escape him that offered a subject worthy of investigation to his most enquiring mind; and all was treasured that became interesting to him from the love of knowledge or from motives of affection.

\* Even Pope frequently spelt incorrectly; spelling the same word two or three different ways in his letters.

He was, I have been assured, so economical at the outset of life that he contrived to live very respectably on what he termed his "narrow means," and yet he not unfrequently assisted a friend, even when his own purse was at a very low ebb; and was never in debt. Though so delicate in childhood, his parents (who were sensible as well as most respectable people) wisely kept him in the fine bracing air of Yorkshire during his infant years, a precaution which proved eventually of the utmost advantage to him; it



Ritson's Songs: "Cupid Chained" Published 1783.

gave health and strength to an originally weak constitution; and his naturally placid, patient, and equal temper, with the blessing of having a constant pursuit, was altogether friendly not only to his mental vigour, but to the longevity he enjoyed.

He was, from a boy, fond of exercise; and, on the whole, took a good deal. But this very "medicine" (for so he called it)

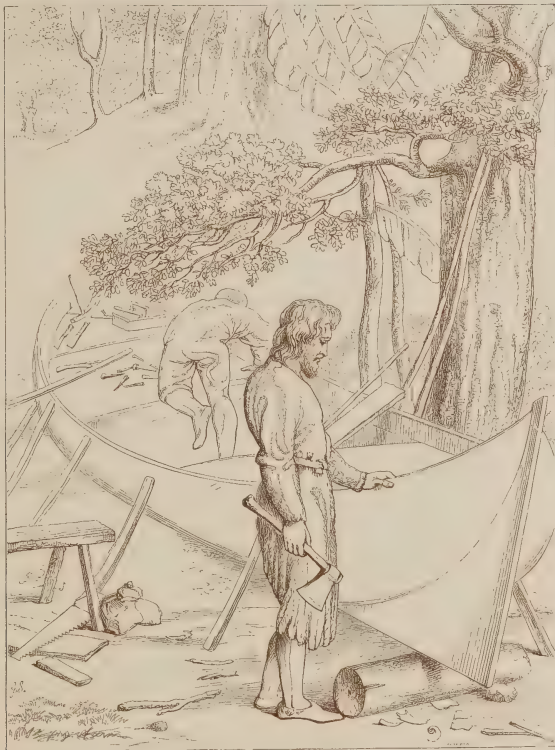


he turned to account in his pursuits. Intent on the study of nature, he could not even take a walk, but living and furrounding objects would arrest his eye, engage his mind, and supply food for memory and reflection. Whilst yet but a very young man, as soon as the Academy closed, he would make his way into Worcester-shire ; and there purchasing a sure-footed Welsh pony, would set off on a tour in North Wales. The pony was retained until he came back to the Borders, where it was sold ere he once more returned to London.

In these excursions Stothard delighted to roam through the wildest and grandest scenery that mountain and valley, stream and cataract, could present. He drew, all the way he went, everything which most struck his fancy, making his sketches with great care ; and pausing amid rocks, woods, and ravines, such as a Salvator would have delighted to portray. Carmarthen and Conway Castles, Bangor, and other celebrated places, were all visited and pictured with that fine feeling for nature, and truth of representation, for which he was so remarkable in all he did throughout life. On the sketches thus made, and recollections thus acquired, at a more mature age, he founded those most beautiful backgrounds, introduced in his illustrations of Robinson Crusoe, his Fête Champêtre, the Decameron, and other subjects of that class.

These early sketches were retained by him for many years with great interest ; they were kept apart from others in a portfolio, in his painting-room. And though it will be digressing, I cannot resist here pausing a moment to tell the reader their fate. One winter's morning (when Stothard lived in Newman Street) he came rather unexpectedly into his room, when he found an Irish housemaid engaged in lighting his fire with the contents of

his portfolio of North Wales ! His vexation and surprise may well be conceived ; he could not help expressing them, but the



Robinson Crusoe and Friday making a boat. Engraved by Medland in 1790.

damfel very civilly excused herself by telling him, she thought they were waste papers. "Woman !" exclaimed Stothard, "you are

the greatest incendiary I ever knew in all my life ; you have burnt Conway and Carmarthen Castles, and the whole town of Bangor, in this one morning's work." From that time forth the painting-room door was kept locked—and the key in its master's pocket ; and never was a servant allowed to enter its precincts for the purpose of sweeping, &c., without being watched, and at very distant periods ; and truly on this account, the apartment often wore a very dim and dusty aspect. To return to the subject.

In the early times of which I am now speaking, Stothard would occasionally spend a few days with his friends in sailing up the Medway, landing and sketching as they pleased. In one of these excursions he was accompanied by his old friend Mr. Ogleby,



Stothard and friends prisoners during a boating excursion at Upnor Castle on the Medway, from an etching by himself.

and Blake, that amiable, eccentric, and greatly gifted artist, who produced so many works indicative of a high order of genius, and sometimes no less of an unsound mind. Whilst the

trio were one day engaged with the pencil on shore, they were suddenly surprised by the appearance of some soldiers, who very unceremoniously made them prisoners, under the suspicion of their being spies for the French government; as this country was then at war with France. In vain did they plead that they were only there sketching for their own amusement; it was insisted upon that they could be doing nothing less than surveying for purposes inimical to the safety of Old England. Their provisions were brought on shore, and a tent was formed for them of their sails, suspended over the boat-hook and oars, placed as uprights in the ground. There were they detained, with a sentinel placed over them, until intelligence could be received from certain members of the Royal Academy, to whom they appealed, to certify they were really peaceable subjects of his Majesty King George, and not spies for France.

Stothard made a very spirited pen and ink drawing of this scene, whilst under detention. On their liberation, they spent a merry hour with the commanding officer, to whom the artist remarked, that an opportunity had been given him for making a sketch he had not anticipated; whilst Ogleby declared that once being taken prisoner was quite enough for him; he would go out no more on such perilous expeditions.\*

It was not possible that a young man of Stothard's poetic order of mind could long be insensible to the fascinations of youth and beauty. He fell in love with a Miss Watkins, a lady who was

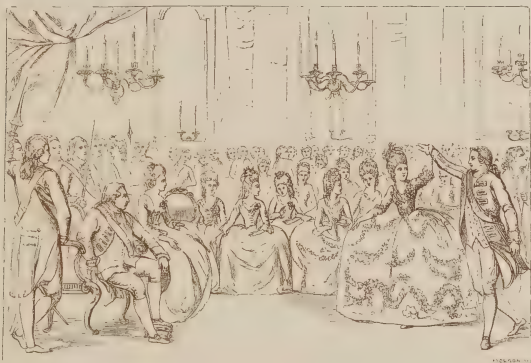
\* In the British Museum, amongst the folios containing Stothard's works in the Print Room, an etching from this drawing may be seen, called *A Boating Excursion*. The etching is there stated to be by Blake; but Alfred Stothard says it was by his father. The drawing was sold at Christie's sale, and is now in the possession of Mr. William Sharpe, of Highbury.

handsome and agreeable ; and like her brother, the Captain, possessed a good deal of shrewd observation, natural humour, and vivacity. She was an Anabaptist. Her father, a man of good fortune, was so infatuated by a fondness for all sorts of dissenting ministers, that he opened his house rather too liberally, and spent his money rather too freely, on gentlemen of that description ; some of whom were not the sincerest or best of their kind. He had not the happiness to be acquainted with men so excellent as Wesley and Robert Hall.

Stothard, it seems, did not immediately win the object of his choice. But the affections of such a heart as his were incapable of change. For some time he patiently preferred his suit, and at length gained the hand of the fair Rebecca. But, though his love was true and deep, it was always more or less accompanied with that serenity which formed a marked feature in his character. After he had led his beloved to the altar, not to lose an hour from his studies, even on his wedding-day, he conducted home his bride, and then very quietly walked down to the Academy, to draw from the antique till three o'clock, the hour at which it then closed. There he sat, by the side of a fellow-student named Scott, with whom he was intimate, and, after drawing the usual time, at length said to his friend, "I am now going home to meet a family party. Do come and dine with me, for I have this day taken to myself a wife."

His marriage was productive of many joys and many sorrows. Eleven children were the fruit of it ; only six of them lived beyond infancy ; and of the truly melancholy fate of two of those who survived to riper years, I shall have to speak in due time and place. Here it will suffice to say, that so increasing a family obliged him constantly to labour, and often to accept commissions

that were too trifling, and of too minute an order, for a painter of his master mind and hand: for instance, such commissions as designing for pocket-books, ladies' fashions, sketches of court balls, and amusements, royal huntings, and for ordinary magazines and play-books. But, so great was Stothard's love of art and the



A View of the King's Ball at St James's, on the King's Birthday, June 4, 1782.

simplicity of his character, that he made his designs for these with the same care, and threw into them the same exquisite grace, which he bestowed on the highest order of his works. He felt the truth of that admirable remark, I believe by Johnson, "that what is worth doing at all, is worth doing well." Yet, if we consider how much below his merit were some of the tasks in which, at this period, he engaged, it is ever to be lamented that good King George the Third (who so munificently patronised West, fancying he was encouraging the greatest living artist) had not bestowed his royal countenance and bounty on Stothard; as, by giving him

commissions, he would have given him independence, and enabled him to employ, on a scale and on subjects worthy of his genius, those astonishing powers with which he was endowed.

A circumstance also which might have contributed to injure him in the early part of his career, was that an amateur landscape painter, Sir George Beaumont, whose rank and fortune gave more authority to his opinions, than, from his own talents, they were entitled to claim, never could understand nor acknowledge the genius of Stothard. And



*Pilgrim's Progress: The Alarm.* Engraved 1788. Christian, alarmed at having read that the city in which he lived was threatened with destruction, expresses his great anxiety to his Wife and Children.

as Sir George's opinions very much fet the fashion of his day in art, as to who was, or was not, to be admired, in all probability Stothard suffered by soaring above his comprehension, and therefore being deprived of his praise.



I know not when he first became acquainted with Alderman Boydell; by whom he was employed for those beautiful illustrations of Shakespeare, of which more will be said hereafter; but he used to relate a circumstance respecting the attention he received from him, that was not a little amusing, and, as it is connected with his pursuits, it shall here find a place.

At the time Boydell became Lord Mayor of London, our artist was residing in Henrietta Street, Covent Garden. He was one day greatly surprised, by seeing the private carriage of his lordship drive up to the door empty. A note was delivered informing him that my Lord Mayor was about to give that evening (April 12th, 1791) a ball and entertainment at the Mansion House; and so earnestly desired to have the pleasure of his friends Mr. and Mrs. Stothard's company, that he had sent his own carriage for them. Accordingly they went, and were most kindly and graciously received. Everything was grand and splendid. But although Stothard had in former days learnt to dance of Grimaldi's father, he retained no taste for the amusement in his own person. Notwithstanding all the splendour of a civic ball and banquet, the evening would have been a very dull one to a grave and sedate man like himself, had he not brought with him, what he averred no artist should ever be without—his sketch-book; and he soon found employment for his pencil.

Brooke Watson was present, the lion of the evening; and as people came to see and to wonder at him, very probably he determined that they should have something to wonder at; for he danced away with his wooden leg all the evening, to the admiration and amazement of the company; unconscious that this singular display of one-legged agility afforded a subject for

Stothard's sketch-book; and to the studies of that night, may in all probability be traced those worthy citizens of "Cheape," who are so characteristically introduced in his celebrated picture of the Canterbury Pilgrims.\*

In 1792, he was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy; and that year he exhibited his beautiful picture of Confirmation.†

He had now wholly emancipated himself from the school of Mortimer; and the very spirit of Raphael (whose compositions he had so deeply studied) seemed to live and breathe again in the works of Stothard. To name only a few of them will be sufficient to show what were his labours at this period, how rapid had been his progress, and how great the productions of his imagination and his pencil.

His designs for Milton's Paradise Lost (than which nothing was ever more purely conceived or beautifully executed) were engraved by Bartolozzi. His Ruth first beheld by Boaz whilst Gleaning; St. John Preaching in the Wilderness; Jacob's Dream; and The Angels appearing to the Shepherds, were all of the same date: the two last named will bear a comparison with the compositions of the great master of the sacred school, Raphael.

Soon after, Comus was also illustrated, and several striking events

\* Brooke Watson lost his leg by being pursued by a shark whilst bathing: the monster snapped it off, at the very moment when some of his friends, who came to his rescue, were helping him into the boat. I do not know in what place the accident happened.

† I cannot resist here mentioning a little circumstance connected with this painting, which occurred at Christie's sale of Stothard's works after his death. I

was speaking to Sir Edwin Landseer, with great admiration, of one of Stothard's works, before which we were both standing, when he said, "But come here, and look at this." Sir Edwin then led me to the picture of Confirmation, and exclaimed, "Nothing in beauty or grace can go beyond that." This precious painting is now in the possession of the Rev. W. Ruffel, of Shepperton.

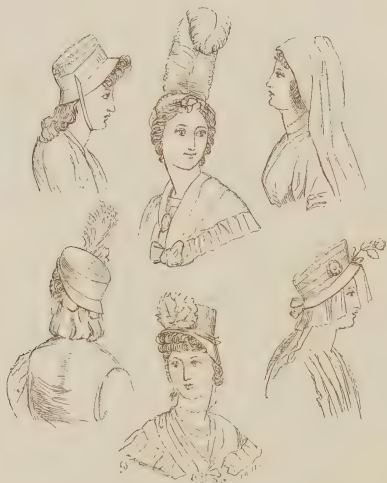
in English history, such as the Marriage of Henry V. with Catherine of France ; Richard I.'s Return from Palestine ; that



Confirmation. Painted in 1702.

chivalrous King's meeting with Isaac Prince of Cyprus ; six designs from Telemachus ; the Dryads finding Narcissus, and various other works. The last ten cited were exhibited at the Royal Academy ;

and great must have been the gratification of Sir Joshua Reynolds, when he saw works not unworthy the schools of Raphael and Parmegiano produced by one whom, but a few years before, he had singled out as the most promising of all the students in that Academy of which he was the head.



Six fashionable Head-dresses for 1707.

## CHAPTER II.

Stothard removes to Newman Street—Robbery of his plate—Elected an Academician—Illustrates the Pilgrim's Progress—The Sylph and the Butterfly—His fondness for Nature—Designs for plate—Studies in the school of Rubens—The Marquis of Exeter employs him to paint the great staircase at Burleigh—Engaged by Heath on Shakespeare—His son Charles sketches the effigies in the churches near Burleigh—Stothard's letter to the Marquis on the terms of his painting—Extracts from letters to his wife—His mother dies.

WHILE Stothard was thus busily engaged in works of so important a nature, his family was fast increasing. He had now three children, and, wanting more room for them, decided on removing to a larger and more convenient house. It happened that one (a freehold property, No. 28, in Newman Street,) was to be sold, with a considerable quantity of handsome furniture, especially that of the drawing-room, for the very moderate sum of one thousand pounds: the proprietor was about to live abroad, and felt anxious to get the house off his hands. Stothard at once decided on the purchase; and, in order to effect it, sold out of the funds nearly all the capital left him by his father. And now did he experience the benefit of early economy and prudence, in never having touched the money till the moment when it could be turned to such good account. On his removal, his widowed mother, upon whom years and decay were fast stealing, and to whom he had ever been a most dutiful son, formed one of his domestic circle, and continued to reside with him till her death.

Thus was he fairly established in *Artists' Street*; for, in a few

years, so was Newman Street designated by the neighbourhood in familiar discourse; and well might it be so. West (the president of the Royal Academy) had lived there seventeen, and Bacon (the sculptor) eighteen years, before Stothard bought his house; and, in a comparatively short period, Russell, Ward, Howard, Jackson (all Academicians), Dawe, and a host of other artists, to the number of about forty, all became residents in the same street.

Before I proceed with his professional career, I cannot refrain from pausing a moment, in order to give a striking instance of that calm and happy serenity of temper which, in this remarkable man, was seldom, if ever, disturbed, except by some trial that might truly be called great. The circumstance I am about to narrate occurred after his removal to Newman Street.

Stothard, though never rich, was the possessor of a quantity of valuable old family plate: I know not if it came to him on his father's side, or his mother's, or from both; but, be this as it may, it was of family inheritance, and therefore doubly valuable. On some occasion (and he was at all times most hospitable) he gave a dinner to several of his friends and some of the Academicians; and the plate was used. The next morning the whole of it was gone. The doors and windows seemed untouched; the robbery, therefore, appeared unaccountable, as the servants in the house were believed to be most steady and respectable. The consternation of Mrs. Stothard, on discovering such a loss, as it well might be, was great. She communicated it to her husband with all a woman's fears and regrets for the disaster. But he bore the intelligence with the most perfect serenity; and, as he then expressed himself, from that period was content to take his meals without silver.

Many years after this transaction, a criminal in Newgate, whose sentence of death, for an extensive robbery, was changed into transportation for life, confessed to a clergyman, who attended him whilst he expected execution, that he had been concerned in the robbery of Stothard's plate. He acknowledged that he had been connected with the cook, who agreed to leave the drawing-room window unbarred on the night of the party, so that the fellow might get in and open the street-door to his associates. The plate was in a lower part of the house; it was carried off in a sack, and confined to the melting-pot before the following morning.

The next memorable event in Stothard's life was, that, in 1794, he was elected a Royal Academician, when he gave to the Academy a picture of Charity; it being the custom with each artist who becomes a member of that honourable body, to present them with a painting for their council-room, there to remain as a memorial of the talent and attainments of the individual at the time of his election.

It was, I believe, soon after his becoming an Academician, that he designed those illustrations for the *Pilgrim's Progress*, which, as a series, have never been surpassed by his pencil. There is about them a grandeur, a devotional simplicity, combined with his accustomed purity and grace, admirably suited to the religious character of the book. As an instance of the sublime in art, Christian's conflict with Apollyon may be cited.

About this period he painted a picture which gave rise to a new and delightful combination in his studies of colour for his works; the circumstance which led to it, deserves not to be forgotten.\* He

\* Whilst alluding to Stothard's colouring, it may be useful to others here to state, that the peculiarly rich brown so often admired in his works, was a colour of his own invention, and was thus made by himself:—He procured the shank-bones



was beginning to paint the figure of a reclining fylph, when a difficulty arose in his own mind, how best to represent such a being of fancy. A friend, who was present, said, "Give the fylph a butterfly's wing, and there you have it." "That I will," exclaimed Stothard; "and to be correct, I will paint the wing from the butterfly itself." He immediately sallied forth, extended his walk to the fields some miles distant, and caught one of those beautiful insects: it was of the class called the peacock. Our artist brought it carefully home, and commenced sketching it, but not in the painting-room; and leaving it on the table, a servant (I know not if it were the Irish damsel) swept the pretty little creature away, before its portrait was finished.\* On learning his loss, away went Stothard once more to the fields to seek another butterfly. But at this time one of the tortoise-shell tribe crossed his path, and was secured. He was astonished at the combination of colour that presented itself to him in this small but exquisite work of the Creator; and, from that moment, determined to enter on a new and delightful field—the study of the insect department of natural history. He became a hunter of butterflies; the more he caught, the greater beauty did he trace in their infinite variety: and he would often say, that no one knew what he owed to these insects; they had taught him the finest combinations in that difficult branch of Art, colouring.

Not, however, in butterflies only, but in everything, Stothard was an indefatigable student of nature. He went nowhere without

of the sheep, baked them well in an oven, and then ground them down to a fine powder, and used it as he would any other colour.

\* This sketch of the butterfly, with one wing only finished, was sold amongst Stothard's drawings, after his death, at the sale at Christie's in 1834.

a sketch-book, and nothing struck his eye or his fancy but it was transferred to it. He recommended this practice to others, with the injunction, never to alter anything when absent from the object drawn: he said that, unless this rule was observed, all the spirit of the sketch would be lost. In his walks to Iver (about eighteen miles from London), whither he often went, accompanied by his son Alfred, to visit his aged aunt, Mrs. Hales, after they had passed Acton, he would say, "Now let us leave the high road, and away to the fields and the hedges; we shall find there some beautiful plants, well worth seeking." No sooner had they done so, than the sketch-book and colour-box were brought forth from his pocket; and many a wild plant, with its delicate formation of leaf and flower, was carefully copied on the spot. This was done with a fine pen filled with the tints required; the springing of the tendrils from the stem, and every elegant bend and turn of the leaves, or the drooping of a bell, was observed and depicted with the utmost beauty.

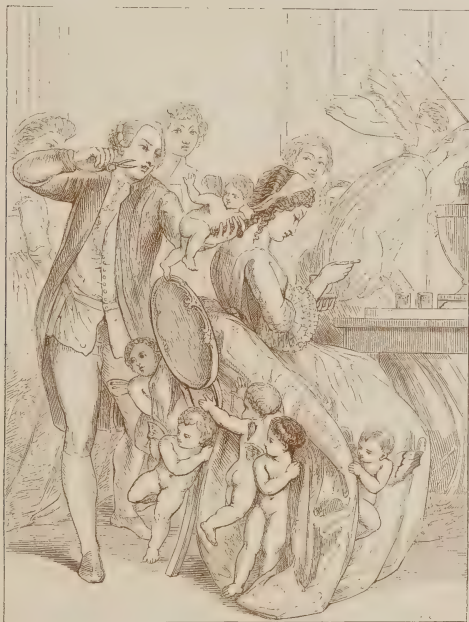
When reminded by his son of the long way they had yet to go, and that they must absolutely proceed, or run the chance of being benighted, he would nevertheless linger to the last moment, and then close the book with regret. And when the walk was resumed, he sometimes stopped and exclaimed:—"Look, Alfred, observe that plant; what a study for an architect! Few architects can build churches and towers, or add pinnacles and ornaments with taste and skill: but let them come here—that plant with its little companion, and that with the large broad leaves in the background, would teach them a valuable lesson." And often was the sketch-book again brought forth to secure some recollection, however slight, of what had so struck him. He remarked, that of all studies, nature

formed the most inexhaustible and delightful, and that every artist should, in some way, make his art his recreation ; for, let him sketch what he might, some time or other he would find it useful. Stothard was himself an example of the truth of this observation.

Commissioned by the house of Messrs. Rundell and Bridge, he made many magnificent designs for chased plate for the sovereign and chief nobility. In these his study of plants was apparent. The delicate bud, the tender leaf of the stems and clusters, were all employed as he had gleaned them in the field of nature. The spreading silver branches holding forth their lights to the assembled guests round the table of a royal banquet, the superb sword and scabbard, with its chased and jewelled hilt, presented to some British hero by the hand of the sovereign prince, were all in their appropriate character,—their beauty and their grace, emanations from the genius of Stothard, inexhaustible in its resources, and in all its imaginings still pure and elegant. Grace, indeed, was inherent in his mind ; it pervaded not only all he did, but all he thought or imagined.

The beauty of Stothard's modern female dresses, in such subjects as Belinda in the Rape of the Lock, Phillis and Brunette, &c., merits great admiration ; and here we find that even this comparatively minor excellence was the result of observation and study ; for he took pleasure in walking down some of the streets, where the principal shops displayed in their windows rich silks, in order that he might observe their various tints. In a lady's dress there was nothing he so much admired as those which are called *shot silks* ; where, as the figure moves in the light, a variety of tint and colour is seen in every fold ; and this taste in Stothard may be traced to nature, as we find it in the peacock, and in the breast of the pheasant and the turtle-dove.

About the year 1796, Stothard began to study attentively the works of Rubens : this was apparent in the picture he that year exhibited of *Victory* : it had much merit, and possessed that depth of tone



*Rape of the Lock.*

and richness of colour, in which the great Flemish master was unrivalled.\* In the three or four following years he executed fo

\* *Victory* was a favourite with Stothard ; he would never part with the picture. After his death it was bought by Mr. Rogers at Christie's sale.

many works, that, merely for a list of the principal, the reader must be referred to the appendix, as here to enumerate them would be tedious.

His reputation had now so much spread amongst the really tasteful and judicious in art, that the Marquis of Exeter, wishing to adorn with paintings the grand staircase of his princely mansion of Burleigh, near Stamford, in Northamptonshire, applied to Stothard to execute the work. For this he made three designs—War, Intemperance, and the descent of Orpheus into Hell. In treating the second subject named, he introduced Cleopatra with Mark Antony, at the moment she is casting the pearl into the cup to dissolve the precious jewel: she is surrounded by the Loves and Graces, and surmounted by allegorical personages and emblems. These paintings were executed on so large a scale, that the figures are nearly eight feet in height, and possess the utmost power and brilliancy of colour. Mr. Alfred Stothard, who saw them a few years ago says, they are as fresh as if just executed, and as a whole, he considers them the finest which this country possesses of his father's works. They occupied four successive summers, commencing in 1799.

Indefatigable as Stothard was whilst employed on these magnificent subjects, he nevertheless found time, at the intervals in which he retired to his own apartment, to execute several designs and pictures of great merit. Amongst them may be named his beautiful compositions for the *Historic Gallery*, published by Boyer; Cadell and Davies's edition of *Gesner*; and Kearsley and Heath's *Shakespeare*.

Some circumstances connected with this last undertaking are too characteristic of Stothard's meek and patient temper to be passed in silence. Heath, fearing that others might engage his pencil for a similar work, caused a bond to be drawn up between them, not

quite so fearful in its nature as old Shylock's, but nevertheless sufficiently stringent, as the painter was to forfeit no less a sum than five hundred pounds, if he did not complete the work; and Heath bound himself to forfeit the same sum, if he employed any other artist to make the designs for it. Several were executed that were truly beautiful; but to Stothard's extreme surprise, he soon found the names of Hamilton, Wheatly and others, (artists now almost forgotten by the inferiority of their productions), appended to various designs made for the Shakespeare. The cause of this breach of contract was never stated, but it was shrewdly suspected, that these very second rate artists worked cheaply, which Stothard did not. His friends were indignant, but although he felt he was not well used, he did nothing to enforce the penalty, and never even alluded to it in any hostile manner. The work however suffered, for so inferior were their designs, and so greatly was the hand of Stothard missed, that after he had ceased to labour for it, the sale declined, and the undertaking no longer prospered.

Not only did Stothard execute the paintings already mentioned at Burleigh, but, to oblige the Marquis, he altered and touched the ceilings, several of which were by Verrio; the subjects were Heaven and Hell.\*

Whilst he was there, many noble and honourable guests were frequently visiting, and some staying in the house, for the Marquis

\* Concerning these ceilings, Stothard used to tell rather an amusing story, which was a tradition of the household when he was at Burleigh. Verrio was long there, and whilst engaged on his task was very particular about his dinner, to which the cook did not always give the attention he

required. On one occasion he so enraged the painter by his neglect, that Verrio next morning introduced the offender in his Hell; where, to this day, the luckless master of the spit remains, as Falstaff says of Bardolph's nose, "Burning, burning!"

was exceedingly hospitable. Amongst others was a certain dignitary of the church, who often joined Stothard in his summer evening rambles. On one occasion, he prepared to go out with his nippers and his net to catch butterflies and insects, when his clerical friend thought it became him to read him very gravely a lecture, on the cruel and unchristian-like practice to which he was addicted. This reproof was received with meekness; when going on a little further they came to a piece of water. The fish were making bubbles and rings in it by darting up to the surface to catch the flies—"Bless me," exclaimed the divine, "how plenty the fish are here; I wish I had my rod with me. Are you an angler, Mr. Stothard?" "No," replied Stothard, "I have some doubts about angling, whether it may not be a cruel and unchristian-like practice, when we think of the worm, the hook, and the fish."

Whilst at Burleigh Mr. Stothard's wife, and his son Charles, then a youth, were for awhile guests. Charles drew very well for his age: but wanting employment with his pencil, to fill up his time, his father told him to go and make drawings of some ancient effigies in the neighbouring churches. He did so; and there can be no doubt this circumstance occasioned his first turning his attention to Gothic sculpture; and gave rise to a fondness for the study of antiquity, which, at a more mature age, rendered him eminent as an antiquary, and led the way to his original and beautiful work on *The Monumental Effigies of Great Britain*.

Amongst a multiplicity of rude drafts of letters in the handwriting of Stothard (too imperfect to be given) I found one addressed to the Marquis of Exeter, on the completion of the paintings. It is written in a very confused manner: yet shows great delicacy on the part of the painter; and the very confusion



which pervades the whole, seems the result of what I ever thought to be a marked feature in his character—namely, the pain he experienced when obliged to revert to pecuniary demands; or, as he said, in another letter (to a different person who did not pay him as he had often promised) “to do what he hated, *ask for money*.”

In this letter to the Marquis, he states that the paintings on the great staircase were to be completed for one thousand guineas, and to be finished in three years. In the time he was at work he had received nine hundred and ninety-three pounds for the years—

|      |   |   |   |   |   |   |     |
|------|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|
| 1799 | . | . | . | . | . | . | £63 |
| 1800 | . | . | . | . | . | . | 315 |
| 1801 | . | . | . | . | . | . | 315 |
| 1802 | . | . | . | . | . | . | 300 |

By this statement, he said, 57*l.* were deficient of the thousand guineas. But the year 1803, he considered “an indulgence added to the preceding years, on the same terms.” On that year (1803) he had, at the time of writing, received only 50*l.*, leaving due to him 265*l.*, to which might he be allowed to add the 57*l.*, it would make the amount due to be 322*l.* But continues he—“If the mention of the 57*l.* should appear in the least unreasonable” (and he says in the letter, he entertained doubts about the propriety of mentioning it at all,) and “if your Lordship thought the indulgence of another year added to the former, ample compensation to smooth any difference in that account, in such case,” he concludes, “your sentiments on this matter will be received with cheerful compliance by your Lordship’s most obedient servant, Thos. Stothard.”

At the end of this rough draft appears, written *in pencil*, (but not in Stothard’s hand) these words:—

“Lord Exeter has directed me to pay Mr. Stothard 300*l*.”

The hand-writing of this is business-like; and may, probably, have been that of the house-steward of the Marquis, the late Mr. Christian, with whom our artist was on terms of familiar intercourse; and to whom, it is not improbable, he might have submitted the above draft of an intended letter; when finding, as intimated by the note in pencil, that his Lordship had directed the payment of a sum, so very nearly that which he had calculated on receiving, the letter was not sent at all. In my own mind, I have no doubt such was the fact, as it is not for a moment to be supposed that a nobleman of such liberality as the Marquis of Exeter, and who always treated Stothard (as he invariably said) in so handsome and friendly a manner, would have cut off the twenty two pounds from his account.

I must not omit stating that, previous to his engagement at Burleigh, Stothard, amongst many other works, produced his Boaz first seeing Ruth Gleaning, than which nothing can be more striking. It reminds us of the old masters, to the finest of whose scriptural works it is, in every way, equal as a composition. The beauty, the grace, the unaffected and natural attitude of Ruth, who, having just raised herself from the ground, looks up, surprised by the notice of Boaz; the dignity of his person, as he addresses her with interest; the servant placed over the reapers, who stands near him; and the figures busied among the corn, altogether present a scene perfect in its patriarchal truth and simplicity. The buildings and terraces, seen in the background, as the finish of the picture, have in them an appropriate character of Eastern taste and opulence.

Whilst at Burleigh, Stothard frequently wrote to his wife; most of the letters have been preserved; but although they abound



Boaz and Ruth. Designed by Stothard for Macklin's Bible, 1761.

in the expressions of an affectionate care for her and his children,

they do not give any information about his work, more than casually mentioning how closely he applied to it, and that his performance greatly pleased his noble employer. The following extracts, however, selected from many passages of a similar nature, will, I trust, be found of some little interest to the reader, as they show the heart of the man in its most amiable character.

TO MRS. STOTHARD.

“DEAR REBECCA,

“Since I last wrote, I have been very busy sketching a design for the staircase; and, at the same time, seeing that the walls are properly prepared, and colours ground, &c. I have been so intent on this pursuit, as to let three days escape me out of six; for, believe me, I mistook last Saturday for last Wednesday; and this was the cause of your disappointment in not hearing from me. I told you in my last, Lord Exeter had been here, and went from hence the day before my arrival, which has prevented my seeing him. I think it is better that it so happened, as I had nothing to show his Lordship. If he returns about the time my business concludes, as I conjecture he will, I may settle the future with more confidence. \* \* \* I am glad to hear Charles is well, and hope he does not run away from his dinner-hour; as he is growing, I am more anxious about this, for he has been too apt to go out and not return in proper time. Let your next letter be a little longer, and tell me more of yourself, and how your time has passed away. Has any one been to see you, or Miss Naylor paid you the visit she promised you? It will give me pleasure to hear you have so agreeable a companion; in short, give me a few particulars, it will break through the continued anxiety I feel in my

present undertaking, which now entirely depends on my own efforts. One day is so like another, on account of the extreme regularity—it was in some degree the cause of my forgetting time as I did last week.” \* \* \*

The next extract is still from Burleigh, and in the autumn of the same year, 1799.

“I shall not come home till Thursday. If the fatigue of travelling all night is not too much for me, I promise myself the happiest hours I have experienced a good while in your company and the children’s; so let me see them in their best bib and tucker, and we will make a holiday of it. I should have been with you on Sunday, but Lord Exeter is going from hence, and will not return till Monday; meanwhile I am to draw up an agreement and state the terms of our future proceedings, which, I am happy to tell you, promise to be much to my mind, and will give *you* pleasure, which is my chief happiness.

“Believe me yours ever affectionately,

“THOMAS STOTHARD.”

The next is from Burleigh in 1800.

“DEAR REBECCA,

“Don’t interpret my delay in writing to negligence or indifference, nor think I have forgot my first intention of paying you all a visit; nothing but my being very busy here, makes my absence tolerable. Burleigh and the scenes about it are no palliative, so you must expect to see me soon. I believe I can start in a

fortnight, and return to finish that end of the staircase I am now painting by the time my Lord returns with his new bride, which will be some time in August. \* \* \* You have some doubts if I were courting, whether I should not more readily steal an hour to write to you; perhaps so—but this I am sure of, I do not love you less; and am more easy, having confidence in your sincerity and virtue. My love to the children, and receive the same from your affectionate husband,

“THOMAS STOTHARD.”

From the letters addressed to Mrs. Stothard in 1801, I make the following extracts.

“MY DEAR REBECCA,

“It was with pleasure I received your two last letters; indeed they came at a time my anxiety was almost intolerable. I am now happy so far. \* \* \* The delay you have complained of respecting my writing, you must afford some indulgence to, as I have much to do here, and till I have broken the neck of the work in hand, can find very little respite, and independent of the attention I must bestow, I am in the continual exercise of ascending and descending steps, and shifting them from place to place. I find myself perfectly jaded before night, and sometimes could dispense with my supper for bed. With this combination of mental and bodily exercise, I should not write were it not to yourself.”

“Burleigh, Sept. 6, 1801.

“DEAR REBECCA,

\* \* \*

“I am endeavouring to conclude my business

here before the end of this month; the day I cannot ascertain in the present state of the work. The Marquis and Marchioness seem well pleased and pay me flattering attentions; I therefore should not like to leave Burleigh with my work slovenly done, and thereby forfeit their good opinion for the future, as well as the public's. On this you may depend, that I am not backward in my exertions to make a good finish for the present summer. I write this, my dear Rebecca, that you may know my present situation, and thereby make yours as agreeable as you can, which I hope is pleasant."

"Sept. 13, 1801.

"DEAR REBECCA,

"Write to me by return of post, if it be but two lines, informing me how you are, and how Hammer Smith agrees with you, for I am unhappy till I hear from you. Don't perplex yourself with the idea of filling a sheet, you need tell me of nothing but your health, and I shall be satisfied; for myself, I am determined to be with you before the twenty-sixth if possible. \* \* \* If you are at Hammer Smith, tell me how you spend your time, &c. If you use much exercise; if you avail yourself of country milk at breakfast instead of tea; whether you study diet more than physic? However, I long to be with you, and consult you concerning your health; and, trust me, nothing shall be spared in my power to recover you. Do scratch a line, my dear Rebecca, immediately. Again I repeat it, and you will afford consolation to your ever affectionate husband,

"THOMAS STOTHARD."



"Burleigh, Monday, October 5, 1801.

"MY DEAR REBECCA,

"The day after I wrote to you I received yours. I felt great pleasure to find you had spent your fortnight so agreeably at my aunt's. It spread an air of cheerfulness over your letter which convinced me your health was benefitted by it. You will not doubt, my dear, my wish to see you and the children after my long absence. I had determined on leaving Burleigh on the eighth inst. at farthest; and had signified to my Lord my intentions without specifying the time. Since I wrote to you last, he has requested I would make it convenient to stay till the twelfth, which is Monday next, five days longer than myself had proposed. On the whole, I am better pleased that he has fixed the time than myself. We have, this month past, been all bustle and life; much company going and coming, too numerous for me to remember their names, so I shall not attempt to send them to you; and for more interesting particulars, I intend to bring them with me. I have the pleasure to tell you I am much better in my health of late than in times past; and I believe if I were here longer, I should fill up and become quite another thing—but I must first forget home, which is impossible; so expect me next Tuesday.

"I am, dear Rebecca, yours most affectionately,

"THOMAS STOTHARD."

"MY DEAR REBECCA,

"It was my intention to have been with you at the time you will receive this letter; but now I must tell you for the last time, I shall not be with you till Friday noon. As I have settled

everything with my Lord, I shall have nothing now to oppose the earnest desire I feel of seeing you after my three or four months' absence. As I have received very kind attentions from Lord and Lady Exeter, I wish to return it by a cheerful compliance with their wishes that I should stay at Burleigh till Thursday, when they themselves will take leave of this place for a fortnight or more. As for myself, at all events, I shall take a place in the coach for town, and dine with you on Friday; of this be assured. You have in your former letters enquired after our friends here. They are all well; they often mention you, with respectful enquiries after your welfare. Lady Exeter, in particular, pleased me by her kind manner of enquiring after you."

The next letter is also from Burleigh.

"Sunday, Sept. 3, 1802.

"MY DEAR REBECCA,

"I find a fortnight is too long a time not to hear from you; indeed if you knew how much I suffer from apprehension for your health, I am certain you would not delay writing. I hope nothing has happened to prevent the fulfilment of your promised coming here. Every accommodation is prepared for your reception. The country yet retains its former dress, and with the weather is altogether delightful. I have selected one of the pleasanter apartments for your use. Let me entreat you, my dear, not to delay any longer or lose the present opportunity. I think you may contrive to stay here a fortnight at least, and for your health's sake longer; but you must not lose any time, but come, and don't let trifles prevent you. In your next letter tell me the day I

may expect you, and the coach you come by, that I may meet you at Stamford. When I wrote to you last, the Marquis's health was in that state to render it very uncertain how long he would stay from hence ; at present he has recovered, and entertains the hopes of a longer absence from Burleigh. As for myself, I find my health governed very much by your letters, or your silence ; so pray write to me by the return of post. Give my love to the children, and accept the same from your affectionate husband,

“ T. STOTHARD.

“ P. S. Bring with you the vols. of the Spectator, and Bewick's History of Quadrupeds.”

During the time his great work was in progress at Burleigh, Stothard lost his mother, who lived to attain the age of 87 years. She died in his house in Newman-street, where for so long a period she had experienced, both from himself and his wife, the most kind and affectionate care.\*

\* I have but one circumstance more to mention in connexion with Burleigh ; and although it may be here somewhat out of place, it ought not to be omitted, as it serves to show the respect in which the memory of Stothard was held not only at that noble mansion, but in the neighbourhood. Some years ago, his son Alfred visited Burleigh, in order to see his father's greatest work. The Marquis was absent, but he was most kindly received by the household. Some of the principal tradespeople of the town of Stamford, hearing

he was there, called a meeting and proposed to give a public dinner to the son of Stothard, as a token of gratitude for the benefit his father had conferred on their town by the number of strangers who resorted to it, in order to see the magnificent paintings on the staircase of Burleigh House. The dinner was arranged, and actually given, although, from some error in the sending or the delivery of the letter of invitation, Mr. Alfred Stothard had gone away before it arrived !

### CHAPTER III.

Stothard's Death of Nelson—His Robinson Crusoe making his Long Boat—Visits the English Lakes and Scotland—His Jubilee Transparency—Designs from Froissart—Visits Hafod—Col. Johnes—Death of Miss Johnes—Stothard's design for her monument—His letters from Hafod.

IN the year 1804, Stothard was so occupied by commissions, that he sent nothing to Somerset House; but in the following year he



Queen Charlotte surrounded by The Royal Family. From a pocket-book.

contributed what was not at all calculated for an exhibition picture; his sketchy design for a portion of the staircase at Burleigh, which by many who looked at it, could not be understood. In 1806, he was applied to by the widow of John Macklin, the publisher, to go

down to Chatham, and there take steps preparatory for a picture of the Death of Nelson; a print from which she proposed to publish by subscription. He made some bold pen and ink drawings from the heads of several sailors of the Victory: he was to receive two hundred pounds for the picture, and commenced it; but Mrs. Macklin not being able to meet with subscribers sufficient to carry out her plan, the picture remained, unfinished, on his hands, and in that state was sold after his death at Christie's.\*

In 1808, Stothard exhibited, amongst many other works, his exquisite design of Robinson Crusoe making his Long Boat.

The next occurrence in the life of our Academician was his visit to the Lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland in 1809; whence he proceeded in the same year to Edinburgh, and afterwards to various parts of Scotland, for the purpose of illustrating, for Mr. Constable, an edition which he was about to publish of the Poems of Burns. The great merit of the drawings and designs he made for the works of that exquisite poet of nature, raised his name so highly in Scotland, that, some years after, he was chosen (as will be noticed in due place) to adorn with his pencil one of the national institutions of the capital.

On his return to town, as nothing came amiss to him, he executed for Messrs. Rundle and Bridge a large transparency, which was displayed in front of their house at Ludgate Hill, and greatly admired on the Jubilee day, held in honour of good King George

\* I am fortunate enough to possess a very good collection of Stothard's original drawings, besides a few of his oil paintings. Amongst the former are some of the sketches that he made of the sailors who were on

board Nelson's ship at the time of the action in which the naval hero lost his life. These sketches are very striking, and remind one of some of the old drawings by artists of the Venetian School.

the Third having reigned fifty years. In this picture King George appeared seated on a throne, furrounded by the Cardinal Virtues. To the right and left of the Sovereign were seen spiral columns, to one of which History was engaged in attaching the



*Pilgrim's Progress, engraved 1789. The Reception. Christian's conduct amidst the difficulties he had passed through, meeting with the approbation of Discretion, Prudence, Piety, and Charity, he is received joyfully into the Palace Beautiful.*

names of the naval and military victories of his reign : Mars and Neptune were reclining at his feet.

It was, I believe, both before and after this period, that he was employed by the late Col. Johnes to decorate the splendid and beautifully situated mansion he had erected at Hafod, near the Devil's Bridge, in North Wales. Col. Johnes had then recently translated the *Chronicles of Froissart and Monstrelet* ; and Stothard was requested by him to select from them subjects for pictorial

decorations. In another way he was also of infinite service to Hafod. So varied was the genius, and so great the knowledge, of this eminent painter, in every branch of the fine arts, that his taste in architecture only wanted opportunity for its development. Col. Johnes consulted him about the internal finish of his house; and I have found fragments of his plans and advice, and directions concerning this matter, which (though in too rude and scattered a form to render it possible to give them here) show how readily and how zealously he entered upon a subject foreign to his general pursuits.

I have seen several of his original sketches and designs for his paintings at Hafod; and these chivalrous scenes,—mostly, I believe, in illustration of Froissart, possessed all the accustomed merits of his works, in composition and execution.

To a mind like Stothard's, Hafod must have been a delightful place of retreat, could he have prevailed with himself to be a little less laborious than he was whilst in such a spot, and in such society as he there found. Col. Johnes, though neither gifted with the genius nor the high intellectual powers which distinguished Mr. Beckford (another wealthy patron of Stothard), was nevertheless a man of useful and praiseworthy literary pursuits, and of a most cultivated taste in the fine arts. He had been the friend and patron of Banks the sculptor, whose classic merit he appreciated when it was sadly neglected by the world at large. He had aided nature by his skill in the decoration of his own grounds, amidst some of the wildest and most striking scenery of North Wales; for both cataract and mountain were within his domain. He twice raised a princely mansion in this favoured spot, and each time enriched it with the choicest works of art; and, what was not less deserving record, at



a time of much public distress, by making roads around him, and other considerable works, he gave, by labour, bread to hundreds of the poor in his vicinity. Such was Col. Johnes.

His wife was a woman entitled to respect as well for her understanding as her character; and his daughter, an only child, admired, beloved by all who approached her, was almost idolised by



*Pilgrim's Progress*, engraved 1780. *The Reflection*. Mercy persuaded by Christiana to accompany her and her children upon their Pilgrimage, reflects on the dangerous state of her relations, and weeps at leaving them behind.

her father. In person Miss Johnes had the misfortune to be somewhat deformed; but she had a most beautiful face and a still more beautiful mind. Her manners were captivating; she was an admirable musician, and sang with uncommon feeling: indeed, her acquirements were extensive; and Stothard, who sincerely esteemed her, aided and directed her studies in drawing, and felt an interest in

her progress, which must have arisen from his conviction that she possessed no inconsiderable talents for the art. Such were the inmates of Hafod in 1810, when Stothard was there in the threefold relation of guest, artist, and friend. Alas! in how short a time did that happy and social circle completely pass away! In the summer of 1811 the amiable and gifted Miss Johnes died suddenly, in the very prime of youth, and in the midst of all its fairest hopes and promises. Her father survived her a very few years; the last work in the fine arts in which he took any interest was the monument he erected to his beloved daughter. Stothard designed it; Chantrey sculptured it.\* Mrs. Johnes, widowed, childless, and heart-broken, did not long outlive her husband; and Hafod itself (at least the original mansion), even before its founder's death, was, together with many noble works of Art which it contained, destroyed by fire.†

The following letters in connection with Hafod will, I hope, possess some little interest here:—

TO MRS. STOTHARD.

“MY DEAR REBECCA,

“Hafod, 1810.

“Since your first letter I have been very unhappy in

\* It represented the sorrowing parent standing by the couch of his dying child. In consequence of the death of Col. Johnes, this beautiful monument remained for some years after its completion, till, I believe, the Colonel's affairs were settled, in the possession of the sculptor.

† Stothard's paintings at Hafod were for the house which was built after the

great fire. They were for the library (it was of an octagonal form), and painted in imitation of sculpture. They filled the panels, eight in number, on the upper part of the room. After the death of Col. Johnes, Hafod was bought by the Duke of Newcastle: great alterations were made in the house, and Stothard's paintings were sent to London, and sold by Christie.

reading your account of yourself. I had no resource from the unpleasant thoughts you had made me entertain, but to apply still more closely (if possible) to my engagements here, and to return as soon as possible home. You have not an idea how my time is filled up, though I think I wrote you some account of it in my last. I have no exercise but what the pencil affords me, and sometimes running from one part of the house to the other. Sometimes I get an hour out of doors, to get a little air. The small room I paint in affords me none; filled, as it is, with eight canvasses, with my colours, oils and turpentine, &c. All the family here, without exception, are very solicitous to administer to my convenience; and I have some difficulty to resist the repeated requests of Mr. Johnes that I would go out more for my health's sake. I mention this to convince you that I might be happy enough with my situation here, if yours and the children's welfare did not solely possess me. If I wish to succeed well with the subjects I am painting, to gain credit and future engagements, it is for your sake; and the care of my health, for the same reason, that I may undertake what better may insure it. This, my dear, believe is from my heart, with which compliment has nothing to do."

TO COL. JOHNES.\*

"DEAR SIR,

"I have delayed writing so long that it has become a task to make anything like a decent apology. The truth indeed is this, I fully expected to have sent the whole of your commissions, not to obtrude a correspondence relative merely to myself. I have

\* This letter has no date; but as Miss the summer of 1811, it was probably Johnes is mentioned in it, and she died in written in the year 1810.

procured the plaster casts to assist Miss Johnes in her studies. It was my intention, when I came to town, to have got casts from originals; but, on considering the expense and hazard of carriage, and moreover the imperfect specimens of the casts—the casts to be procured are so blunt from bad moulds, that I would not recommend them—I have since had recourse to a few good copies, yet as far superior to the others; and they will answer every purpose of study, are more profitable, and will better command a good light, and are ornamental. To have the extremities well defined, I procured them from an ingenious young man, a student in our Academy: I am confident he will do his best to please me. The subjects are the Apollo Belvedere, Venus de Medicis, the Antinous, and Hercules Farnese: he assures me they shall be carefully packed, and, as he understands these things, and has had experience, I have every reason to think they will reach you safely.

“The Gothic screen—concerning this, I have applied to Messrs. Underwood and Doyle, in Holborn, whose business is solely in this way. I explained to them, by means of my sketch, the kind of ornaments and the dimensions, and requested to know what they thought the expense might amount to—the glass excepted. Their answer was, the sum of one hundred and twenty pounds, or thereabouts. They informed me at the same time, that the drawing I had made was too slight, and required strengthening with the aid of woodwork. I have in consequence made another drawing and coloured the wood red, that you might distinguish it from the rest, in the space between column and column. I have given three distinct designs for your choice—amend or reject. I have not neglected your idea of taking the whole to pieces at pleasure. With respect to the arms, I spoke to Mr. Hand; he tells me his terms are from five

guineas to twenty—that the difference is with or without supporters, and the colours, which require different degrees of heat in firing.



*The Wits' Assembly: a frontispiece to the Wits' Magazine, 1784.*

“I have enclosed Mr. Daniel’s East India views, as they are divided into classes, and their price.

“A little pamphlet is all I could procure from the person I applied to concerning the new invented lights. I don’t find the town lighter this winter; none have followed his example.\* These things I

\* Written before the gas lights became general.

got packed together in one box, and a few etceteras for Miss Johnes, and am only waiting for information from you to what place you think it will best suit you to have them sent. From our friend Mr. Malkin, I have had the pleasure to hear of the welfare of your family; and permit me, sir, to add my earnest wish for its continuance; and that I may be remembered to Mrs. Johnes, my opponent in the field of chess, and to my pupil, who, I hope, perseveres in the few, though essential hints, I gave her at Hafod."

## CHAPTER IV.

Archdeacon Markham and Stothard's friends and patrons—Extracts from his letters—His modest estimate of himself—Recommends the study of Raphael and Albert Durer—The cartoon of St. Paul preaching to the Athenians—The Transfiguration—Stothard's opinion of the same—His letter on his journey to Paris.

I DO not know at what period Stothard first became acquainted with the Rev. Robert Markham, Archdeacon of York, and Rector of Bolton Percy, Yorkshire. But in this gentleman he found a patron who was an enthusiastic admirer of his genius, and a friend. Stothard was more than once his guest; and when the Archdeacon was carrying on extensive improvements in his house, under the late Mr. Alexander, the architect, our artist's taste was called in to give assistance, and all he suggested was approved. Miss Georgiana Markham, like Miss Johnes, became his pupil, and he ever spoke of the whole family in terms of the warmest esteem and regard.

The late Mr. Benson, of Doncaster, was likewise his intimate friend; and he painted for him several very beautiful pictures, among them a copy of the Canterbury Pilgrims. The following scraps of advice on art, were found among the rude drafts of his letters, the first was addressed to Mr. Benson. Stothard says:—"I am glad to hear of your application to painting; and that I have had a share in contributing anything towards it. I flatter myself you have improved, and will no doubt continue to do so, by having a proper



confidence, and proceeding with care. You have a very pleasant field before you to select from. And, now I am on the subject, I will recommend (if I did not before mention it) to leave sometimes still life and attempt living subjects. It will make a variety in your studies, and give you an opportunity to introduce the plants and flowers as growing where the animals haunt. This will require an exertion of taste, and so much the better. You have nothing to do but consult nature, and your own good sense in



The Seasons. A vignette published in 1793.

"There is who deems all climates, all seasons fair;  
Contentment; thankful for the gift of life."—J. Scott's Poems.

the selection. One thing I have to recommend; do not introduce any landscape, either as a distant or a middle ground, for such things do no good; they distract the attention—in short, destroy each other. One thing I advise, which comprehends everything, let your objects be few and well discriminated."

In a fragment of a letter to the Rev. Mr. Markham, he says of Miss Markham. "I observed considerable improvement in the

little time I was with her ; especially the last two days. I hope she will remember what I so earnestly repeated regarding the *delicate softness*, as well as *breadth* of the shadows so necessary to produce roundness and relief ; at the same time to remember a piece of advice I gave, not to sit too long without rising ; to retire and compare the effect of the drawing with the original."

In another letter Stothard writes concerning this lady—"I am very well pleased to hear that my pupil makes no abatement in her studies ; and provided she devotes some time daily to draw with care and attention from good originals, I shall be more indulgent as to what may engage her attention at another time. Flaxman's designs are good as to outline, but on that very account, do not go far enough, wanting light and shade, which I very much wish Georgiana to obtain."

The kind interest he took in cultivating the talents of this young friend, is further seen in the following :—"I have since my return, indulged my fancy in supposing I see the Miss M——'s, the one agreeably engaged in drawing the other. I hope this will be realised.

\* \* What think you if Georgiana were to call up sufficient resolution to attempt one or more of the best approved heads in the Paul Veronese's picture I saw in the Chapter House ? I cannot help thinking it would afford a good opportunity for study of light and shade, as well as keeping her hand in practice till her return to Phidias."

Highly as Stothard regarded Archdeacon Markham and his domestic circle ; they were not the only family of influence and station who, at this period, at once patronised the talents, and cultivated the friendship of our Academician. Col. Johnes, and Mr. Benfon, Mr. Thomas Hope, Mr. Boddington, Mr. Beckford,

Mr. Champernown, of Dartington, Devon, Mr. Rogers the poet, and Mr. Flaxman the sculptor, were numbered amongst his patrons and friends; the two last named were peculiarly dear to him. I regret I cannot more particularly mention, not only these, but many other gentlemen of rank and eminence with whom he was acquainted, and from whom he received acts of kindness and attention, in the early part of his career. But, as I have before intimated, Stothard was so retiring and reserved in all which related to himself and his own honour, it was only by a casual circumstance or remark, or by something told by others, who knew him well, that any information could be gained on many points respecting him.

Indeed he was at all times remarkable for a modesty so perfect, that in all his great works (and throughout a whole life devoted to his pencil), I am persuaded he never once thought about himself as being the artist who produced them. He thought about the things he did, and delighted in them because he delighted in the employment of his imagination in producing them; with him all was pure abstracted love of the art, unconnected with self. He painted as Shakespeare wrote, throwing himself into the characters and scenes that he called up, and embodied in his own mind.

The mechanical part of any art once mastered, the highest efforts of genius are always made with comparative ease in their great outline or conception, so was it with Stothard; and hence was it that he, like every other man of transcendent merit, was always modest. The images called forth by the powers of his own imagination rushed upon him like visions of inspiration, he was conscious of no effort—of nothing like *cleverness* (which implies ingenuity, or a skilful exertion of endeavour), the thing seeming to come of itself; how then could he feel vain about it? yet such

modesty is not at all inconsistent with that strong internal conviction, which every man of real merit possesses, respecting his own order of capacity. He feels that nature has given him a stand on higher



Cupid and Campaspe. Engraved 1770.

ground than most of his contemporaries; but he does not look down on them, but above himself. What he does is great, but he still feels that greatness has a spirit which is ever mounting—that

refts on no fummit within mortal view, but foars again and again in fearch of an ideal height, on which to paufe and fold its wings. It is alfo another invariable mark of true genius that it thinks more of the few, or of the one, to whom it has been accuftomed to look up to in early life as a mafter, than of any effort of its own. This conviction of a fuperior, and the habitual refpect paid to fuch, will often remain and cling to the modeft man of genius through life, even when he is become the equal of that one fuperior being in his own line of art.

Such modefty was a marked feature in the character of Stothard. He always talked of Raphael and Rubens, with the reverence of a young ftudent of their works; and he recommended to young ftudents, who confulted him, that they fhould thororoughly imbue themfelves with a knowledge of and a feeling for Raphael, as the mighty mafter of hiftorical compofition in its fimpleft, nobleft, fweeteft clafs. He advifed daily copying from him in outline; and for this purpofe he recommended a work called Raphael's Bible. I never faw but one copy of it, by Lanfranco, and that was badly drawn and engraved. It confifted of a very large collection of designs (taken from the Vatican), by Raphael, illuflrative of the Scriptures. The bad drawing and engraving Stothard confidered of no confequence; becaufe, if the ftudent attended to his own drawing as he ought to do, by copying from the antique, he could eafily correct the drawing, making the limbs &c., in juft proportion in his own fketches, as he copied from thefe fubjects, and the ftudy of them would open his eyes, in a wonderful manner, to difcern what was really excellent in the great art of hiftorical compofition. He would fee how fimplly Raphael told the ftory of his piece; yet what admirable judgment was difplayed in bringing into order and harmony, into fobernefs, and, as it were,

into perfect nature, even the supernatural conceptions of his own great mind. How much he showed the dependence of one figure upon another, in the incident, or, as it might be called, the argument of his picture. The graceful union that pervades the whole, whilst every part is varied according to the character, interest, or circumstance that marks each individual scene.

In Raphael's Bible may be found examples of every possible



Adam and Eve in Paradise. From a Painting in the possession of Miss Rogers.

diversity of invention, or expression, in the highest order of composition. To point them out in detail, would require a volume; and it was Stothard's opinion that the young artist who, *by copying* is *compelled* to dwell upon them, would gradually learn to estimate their marvellous power, as by the improvement of his own taste and feeling, they would gradually unfold themselves to his conception. In Raphael there is nothing violent, nothing to strike with wonder

a common eye. In him art is so hidden by art, and nature so chosen in her most chaste and happy forms, that it requires a more than commonly educated eye to do full justice to his works. Like the poetry of Milton they are not food for the common mind. Raphael's draperies in his Bible, as indeed in all his productions, are thrown by the very hand of grace. No painter ever studied his draperies more than did this master. Stothard recommended a careful study of them, accompanied by the practice of sketching from real draperies. He preferred woollen clothes, such as cloaks are made of, for this purpose, the material being that which falls in folds, round, large and rich, not forming harsh or little broken angles and lines. In discoursing on the beauty of various draperies, he more particularly adverted to those of Albert Durer, of whom he was a great admirer. He said, that however graceful and flowing were the draperies of that master, they still preserved the truest indications of the anatomy of the human figure. He more particularly admired those seen in the cartoon by Raphael, where St. Paul is depicted preaching to the Athenians. The whole composition delighted him, and he would dwell on it with the warmest praise.

Nothing, indeed, can be more simple, nothing more natural, than the attitude and action of the Apostle. Yet what a majesty there is in that simplicity! What energy, what command, in the action of the figure!—Standing alone, erect, the central and arresting point of the whole group—the drapery of the Apostle, unbroken in the detail, marked but by a few long and full folds. When critically examined, every figure in the picture will be found to be dependent on the one prominent character of the piece. St. Paul's is the leading action of the painting; the rest the consequents. The deep attention that absorbs some of the auditory;



their air indicating that they are following up the connection of the argument which the Apostle addresses to them—these, so depicted, are men with whom the understanding bears the most sway. Others break the eagerness of their attention by a casual remark to their neighbours—they are seen in the attitude of speaking to each other. The old are deep and satisfied listeners; their own date of life assures them that their new-born hopes will soon become realised, as the Apostle's discourse opens to them a world beyond the grave. Another individual, from the force of conviction, raises his hands in the fervency of his feelings. This is one of those men with whom the heart sways more than the head. So admirable is this composition of Raphael, that there is not a single object in it but possesses force and meaning; whilst it is equal in sublimity, though not in supernatural effect, to the Transfiguration. I have in my possession, amongst several of Stothard's original and most beautiful drawings, his masterly copy in pen and ink, of one of the cartoons—"The Death of Ananias and Sapphira." This drawing was made by him in early life, and formed one of his many studies after the great Italian painter, whilst he was sedulously schooling himself and cultivating his own imagination with so much skill and care—an imagination which, in this country, has never yet had an equal in his own line of art, and possibly never will.

Stothard's "Angels appearing to the Shepherds," was a picture of the Raphael school; and ranks with the finest of his scriptural compositions. The repose of the sleeping figures, the astonishment of the shepherds, startled from their rest by the cloud of glory that unfolds itself before the angelic host, are altogether perfect; and the distinctive character of the earthly and the heavenly creatures is admirably expressed.

Stothard saw "The Transfiguration" at Paris, just before it was removed from the Louvre to be returned, with other portions of the stolen goods of that lawless plunderer, Bonaparte, to the right owner. An opinion went abroad, I know not how, even amongst some of the artists, that "The Transfiguration" had been re-touched, in parts re-painted, in comparatively modern times. I am glad, therefore, that I have it in my power to give so high an authority as that of Stothard in positive contradiction to an assertion so entirely false; for he repeatedly said that it was wholly unfounded. "The Transfiguration" remained to the time he saw it, as it came from the hand of Raphael. But, such was the dazzling brilliancy of the colouring which the painter had judiciously and purposely given to the *supernatural* part of the subject—(where Moses and Elias appear to our Lord, who, with a brightness that no man could look on, was transfigured before them), that even to this day it remains gorgeous and fresh to such a degree that some of the connoisseurs, and even artists (who had not sufficiently considered the judgment evinced by Raphael in attempting the supernatural brilliancy above noticed), ran with the stream, and followed the common opinion, that such colouring could alone owe its vivacity to the re-painting of comparatively modern times. Harlowe, it is evident (and most highly did Stothard estimate that early-lost artist), had not at all succeeded in giving this brilliancy in his copy of the picture—the whole was too black, too heavy. But on this subject he shall speak for himself. Since the above was written, there was found among his papers a letter (penned soon after seeing "The Transfiguration" at the Louvre), and addressed to his lamented son, Charles, when the latter was engaged in his antiquarian pursuits in the North of England. It is probable that on

his coming home, Stothard might himself have wished to keep a letter which gave some brief account of his trip to France, and fo



Angels appearing to the Shepherds.

have asked Charles to return it to him. This is the only way in which to account for its being found among his own, and not his son's papers.

“FOR C. A. STOTHARD, ESQ.,

“Post Office, Staindrop, Durham.

“DEAR CHARLES,

“I received your letter with your account of Lancaster, &c. About the same time Mr. Lysons called to enquire if you were about returning. He sat with me some time, conversing on different subjects. Again he repeated his visit, when I was from home, and on the Continent as far as Paris. My journey was an unexpected one to me. Alexander, of the West India Docks, with Chantrey and others, making a party of six, excited me to accompany them. Accordingly we left home on Tuesday, the 5th of September, for Canterbury; next morning breakfasted at Dover, crossed over in three hours, with a fair wind; dined and slept at Calais; next night at Boulogne; left it early in the morning, and by noon reached Abbeville. Chantrey and I were so well pleased with the cathedral as to stop and sleep there, and employ the afternoon in drawing from this church, as the rest were viewing the town. Next morning resumed our journey for Amiens. Here apple-trees began to line the road, instead of hedges—for hedges we had seen none since we left England, but open corn-fields, occasionally interrupted by scattered hamlets, appearing like little woods, and in the distance terminating in long lines of wood for fuel (as they burn no coal), with here and there a windmill. This kind of scene may serve for every day's journey since we left Calais.

“When we had gained about two-thirds of our road towards Amiens, we crossed the Somme, the road continuing on its south bank all the way to Amiens. If we were pleased with the principal church at Abbeville, we were transported with that of Amiens: no

dilapidation, no whitewashing. I made here some drawings, particularly of the east end of the cathedral. We left it next morning early, breakfasting at Breteville. Began to see vineyards grace the landscape. Passed through Clermont, and reached Chantilly time enough to take an agreeable walk to view the stables, now entire; but the house and gardens are in ruins. This was the celebrated residence of the Prince of Condé, about twenty miles this side of Paris. After breakfast started again; passed through St. Denis, and entered Paris about noon; and by the Monday (being the sixth day from our leaving home) we were all pretty much sun-burnt, for every day the weather got finer, and from Calais to Paris we rode exposed to an unclouded sun." [Here there is a flight pen-and-ink sketch of the open carriage in which the party travelled.] "This was not one of the usual conveyances, but one we had the luck to meet with in London. A coachmaker had entrusted us with the care of it; an entirely new carriage, extremely light. Having it, gave us the opportunity of stopping where we liked. The coach was consigned to a person at the Hôtel Bruffels, in the Rue Richelieu, close to the Palais Royale. We found the accommodations of this place reasonable, and staid there while in Paris, which was a fortnight. Our plan for every day was to meet altogether at some restaurateur's at breakfast; there we settled at what time and place we were to dine. This generally left us at full liberty to divide our excursions as each felt inclined; it was three to one but we met again at the gallery of the Louvre. Here I met several persons I knew, as Daw, Lawrence, Westmacott, Davis, Lane (who I found was painting in the gallery), and several others, as G. Phillips, of Manchester, the Hon. Charles Long, &c.; but, above all, I was pleased with meeting

the French gentleman you frequently met in Westminster Abbey, and who dined at Mr. Biggs, at Brompton, in company with us. He inquired kindly after you. I, in return, acquainted him with your then expedition to the Roman Wall. I met him frequently; once in the palace of the Tuilleries, when the King was going to chapel. This was on the Sunday, at twelve o'clock; and, in the first room you enter, after ascending the great staircase — the same where the Swiss Guard were, in a manner, destroyed in the late revolution; the circumstance of seeing him there makes me conjecture he may hold some office near the King. He communicated some things not generally known as to the intentions of the allies respecting the removal of public monuments, which soon after took place.

“I was much gratified in seeing the spoils of the Vatican, that I might say, *These things I have seen*. But most of all, I was delighted with the assemblage of paintings to be viewed and compared with each other; the altar-pieces of Rubens, with his school, covered the most space, and made a splendid show; but ‘The Transfiguration,’ by Raphael, *surpassed every thing else*; the splendour of colouring far exceeded my expectation; it was splendid as a painted window, or as enamel-painting, yet not tawdry. Titian appears with advantage in his picture of ‘St. Peter the Martyr.’ I was gratified in viewing some of the acknowledged works of Correggio; above all, I must confess, I was well-instructed by viewing some Gothic pictures of no name, although their characteristic was excessive hardness, with the most violent opposition of splendid colours; a thing, to my thinking, they had in common with Raphael’s ‘Transfiguration.’ On the Monday of the second week I had been at Paris, they began to

take down all the altar-pieces by Rubens, and whatever belonged to Flanders, Holland, and Germany. This afforded me an opportunity to inspect Rubens on the ground. On the Thursday of this second week, we made a day to visit Versailles and St. Cloud. On my return not a picture of Rubens remained on the walls of the Louvre. Visited the Palace of the Luxembourg; the Garden of Plants; and the national monuments. The day before I came away, which was Monday, spent in the Louvre making notes, and a copy, on a scrap of paper, of some part of 'The Transfiguration,' as a sample of its style of colouring; and as the Louvre began to have the appearance of an auction-room, I was impatient to return home. We left Paris on Tuesday morning five o'clock, in the Rouen diligence, through St. Denis and Pontoise: got to Rouen in the evening; stayed all the next day drawing churches and public buildings; and so delighted with it, wished to have stayed longer. On Thursday took leave of my company at eight in the morning, for Dieppe; dined there, and at sunset was out of the harbour; a south-east wind hardly sufficient to move our sails. Found it cool: pigged into my berth, to get warmth and rest. On waking in the morning, heard the chairs rattling about, and found myself off Brighton; it had blown a gale which had carried away our maintop-sail. Got home that evening by nine, and found all the family well. . . . This is all I have to communicate on business, notwithstanding, I have, I think, sent you a long letter: a Roland for your Oliver. I had almost forgot to say, that the delay of your last letter made me somewhat uneasy, and damped the pleasure I received on my return home; and, accidentally meeting one of the Bradleys, who inquired about you, telling me that your friend Kempe had not heard from you, made me entertain



disagreeable apprehensions for your safety ; which increased daily till I received your last letter. You were wrong, Charles, to delay writing for so long a period. I am the more particular in mentioning this in hopes you will correct it in future, for your friends' sake, and those who love you. When you receive this, write to me that you have received it, for, on looking into the map, Staindrop is spelt differently. Believe me, your affectionate father,

“ THOS. STOTHARD.

“ 28, Newman Street, Oxford Street,

“ Oct. 9th, 1815.”

Before I quit the subject of *The Transfiguration*, I cannot resist giving, as a further confirmation of Stothard's opinion of that marvellous work, a few lines extracted from some rude notes he left with a view to forming a Dictionary of the Lives of Painters. These notes were, I believe, the amusement of his leisure hours, in his latter years ; they are in a very rough state, and imperfect : they seem principally to consist of the facts he had collected from printed books. Unfortunately, there are very few remarks of his own on Art, or on the genius of the several artists he mentions. But in giving a short notice of Raphael's birth, death, &c., he did not forget the impression made on his own mind by the sight of *The Transfiguration*, and says of it,—

“ The last effort of this great artist is proof of the rapid improvement he made in his profession ; and far excelled every former effort. How far, had Raphael continued and followed his profession, he would have extended it, must exceed conjecture, as no examples equal this production before or since. This picture

was removed by the French invaders of Italy to Paris, and placed in the Louvre, which I with admiration beheld in 1815, in September; when I was at Paris, and had the opportunity of



St. John Preaching in the Wilderness.

contemplating it, and comparing this performance when placed by the side of others, the finest and best examples of the Venetian and

the Flemish schools, over which it triumphed with a force and splendour of colour unequalled by any examples there exhibited. Thus it struck me at a time of life when the judgment acts more than the imagination."

We see from these remarks how great was Stothard's admiration of the master he had so sedulously studied in early life; and as a further proof how much he was of a kindred spirit with Raphael, I need but refer to his *St. John Preaching in the Wilderness*. The simplicity, yet grandeur, with which the Baptist is depicted, as with a raised arm he points to Heaven, and energetically addresses the assembled multitude, is highly characteristic; whilst every figure in the group is appropriate, and replete with grace, beauty, and sentiment.

## CHAPTER V.

Stothard's advice to students on drawing the figure—Belshazzar's Feast—Importance of outline—Gothic sculpture—Extracts from Stothard's notes on painting—His sketches from dancers—His admiration of Rubens; and of Sir Joshua Reynolds—Callcott—Turner—Barker and Harlowe—His opinions of high finish and perspective—His Fête Champêtre—Purchased by Lady Swinburn.

IN recording, as the recollections occur to me, Stothard's opinions, I am particular in dwelling on those which may be useful to the student of Art. I must not, therefore, omit how earnest he was in recommending a sedulous study of the antique sculpture to *all* young artists, for whatever branch of the art they might be designed. He deemed it absolutely necessary to learn to draw well, since, without good drawing, the finest conceived and coloured picture would but possess half its interest; for, in badly drawn figures, as in badly shaped limbs in a human being, there is always something of deformity, something not natural. Stothard indeed carried this admiration of good drawing very far. He went to see Martin's celebrated picture of Belshazzar's Feast, at the time all the town were engaged in admiring it. He praised the conception of it, as a whole, and especially the grandeur conveyed by the supernatural light from the writing on the wall, making pale and dim all the earthly lights, even the fires kindled to Moloch in the sacrifice. Yet, whilst doing the fullest justice to the genius of Martin, he soon turned away from the picture, with

the remark, "The bad drawing of the figures hurts my eye; it is disagreeable."

He considered that merely drawing the figure from the living subject at the Academy was not enough; the student who does so, without being prepared by previous study from the antique, will be apt to depict nature too much after the Dutch school, in vulgar or common forms, wanting that poetic grace and beauty in which the Greek sculptors exceeded all others, of any age or country. Indeed, he used to say, that he thought bad drawing in a good artist, inexcusable; because it was a proof that he had neglected what was, in a very great degree, a mechanical part of the art, and one, that with proper attention could be so certainly acquired.

On the importance of outline he remarks (in a fragment of one of his letters):—"I am led to apprehend, you think an outline an inferior effort, requiring less care than a finished picture. Outlines are not the trifles the public generally conceive them to be; they have no shadows wherein to hide their defects, or fine colours to compensate for the want of energy, which ought to be the prime quality of outline; and, if well done, will never be without it. Shadows and colours can only give substance to what outline can alone produce."

Stothard had himself practised what he deemed so essential in others. His own early studies from the antique were bold, accurate, and masterly. I have in my possession some drawings he made, also when very young. They are mostly studies from Nature, on a small scale; one of them a hand, and various animals and birds are executed with the most beautiful *finish*. I mention this more particularly, because, from the sketchy manner in which

he left even several of his most masterly pictures, it has been said by some that he could not finish! This is not true. But the multitude—amounting to many thousand designs—of drawings and paintings, that he made in the course of his most laborious life, would not allow him to devote that time on his works which a very high finish of them would have required.

He thought the study of Gothic antiquity likewise useful, and was an admirer of many of the works of the Middle Ages. He considered that several of the Monumental Effigies of Great Britain (a fine work on which, was most originally conceived and executed by his son Charles) were examples of a pure and beautiful style of art. Amongst these he particularly noticed the effigy of Eleanor, the wife of Edward I., in Westminster Abbey; and John of Eltham, Earl of Cornwall, in the same church; of the last he made a drawing. Some of the paintings of the Middle Ages, he considered possessed great merit. There is frequently seen in them so much of nature; the draperies are good, the finish high; though the total want of knowledge in perspective, and in the chiaroscuro, showed an uneducated state of the art; their accuracy was also commendable—you could rely on the truth of their portraits of individuals or things. They did not represent their princes and heroes in masquerade; there were none of those incongruities which became the fashion two or three centuries after; there were no French kings, like the statues of Louis XIV., attired in Roman armour, and finished with the costume of his own day, a full-bottomed wig. Yet am I convinced, from the knowledge of Stothard's feelings in Art, that he would have greatly disliked the present growing fashion among some of our young artists, of imitating the hard style and quaint attitudes



and devices of the Gothic ages. Such, with Sir Hugh Evans, he would have deemed to be "affectations," and would more especially have noticed how happily these imitators caught the faults, but without being equally lucky in catching the beauties, of the Gothic school. Stothard, indeed, detested all *conceits in Art*.





That Stothard gave strict attention to the correctness of costume, we have instances even from an early period of his designs; whilst so great was his feeling for grace, that he contrived to make even the dresses of the date of George the Second tasteful and elegant: as we may see in many of his drawings for the *Novelist's Magazine*; and more especially in those exquisitely beautiful designs for *Clarissa Harlowe*.

Since these remarks were written, I have seen the rough notes, before mentioned, made by Stothard, with a view to form a Dictionary of the Lives of the Painters. Among them were a few which seem to have been intended for a portion of a preface. These are in so rough and crude a state (in parts difficult to be understood) that to give them to the press as they are, would be unjust to his memory; as, no doubt, had he lived to finish them, he would have thrown them into a clearer and better shape. Yet it would be a pity that the slightest observation of such a man, on the art in which he so excelled as to render his name an honour to the country, should be wholly lost. I have, therefore, after reading them with great attention, gleaned from them the following observations, of which I give the substance only, and regret I can do no more.

“The history of the artist and his works must begin towards the latter end of the twelfth century. Greek artists were the sole practitioners. These were employed in the various states of Italy, and were, from time to time, invited there in companies from Greece, to ornament and cover the interior of churches with Madonnas, Angels, and Apostles. In these paintings every variety of colour, gilding, and raised work was introduced, to make a showy appearance; and thus to contribute to architectural embellishment.

“The frequent representation of the twelve Apostles occasioned a necessity for distinguishing them. Individuality of character was, therefore, strictly to be observed ; so that the spectator might at once know the saint’s name from his physiognomy and appearance. This distinctive character in representing the Apostles, by the early Greek painters, was afterwards less observed even in the time of Raphael.

“Formerly, painting was the only means by which the memory of past events was frequently recorded and preserved for the benefit of future generations ; and when we consider the absence of all literary information, what can be more impressive than by means of pictorial representation (such as on the walls of the Campo Santo, at Pisa,) to afford for religious contemplation a succession of subjects from Scripture, thus given in a language requiring little instruction ; indeed in one that even a child may read and understand.

“For the information of a people, during this dark period in Art, little skill was required on the part of the artist ; enough was accomplished, if he conceived he had not fallen into the rear of his contemporaries ; and the people were satisfied if the subject was understood, and cared not for excellence in Art ; they expected to see no more than the narrative clearly represented, and the subject alone consecrated the picture ; and thus far only did their conception of Art extend, or did they concern themselves about it.

“Of the times of still more remote antiquity little was known or remembered concerning pictorial Art, for bigotry and ignorance had combined to destroy all the paintings of the Heathen world ; and no example of Grecian painting remained. Sculpture was an exception ; as the examples in this branch of Art were then more

common in Greece and Italy than in the present time: witness those remains once at Athens, and now preserved in the British Museum; and but for the employment of an improper agent would have been increased. Besides these, the triumphal arch of Trajan, the column of Antoninus, with other examples, were preserved. But these were realities, and not deceptions, like painting; where the artist relieves and rounds a figure, from a flat surface, as the ancients had done, by the magic of light and shade. But such examples in pictorial art were no more to be seen, and the painter had to begin again; and the taste of the public went with him hand and hand. He laboured for them, and he was cautious not to venture beyond what they were able to conceive or understand.

“Our history of painting commences in the dark ages, when Florence, Pisa, Sienna, &c., flourished as republics, independent of each other. The arts were then in the hands of itinerant Greeks; but how long they had continued to practise prior to this time is unknown. Their works remaining to us exhibit nothing beyond the first efforts of art; a hard decided outline, with gaudy colours.

“At Florence, in the Laurentian Library, the oldest MS. there preserved was a Virgil, supposed to have been written in the time of Valens and corrected by the Consul Asterius, in the fifth century. This is now lost; disappearing during the French revolution; and the rest of the MS. paintings are Greek and Italian of the eleventh century, and are more legible than preceding MSS. Forfyth had the curiosity zealously to examine them in his travels through Italy. In these, he tells us, he saw nothing to admire, but the brightness of the colours; a thing common to paintings

which have no shadowing. Some of these are by Oderisi, whom Dante praises as the honour of the arts.

“The first attempt in Art is lineal or outline, and is practised instinctively by all nations, even in their rudest state; colour succeeds to embellish and give a splendid appearance: this is exemplified by the Persians, the Hindoos, the Chinese, and the Japanese, and by every other nation in its early state; even rude as are the Mexicans. The addition of splendid colour is only for embellishment, and gives nothing more. The sentiment, the expression, can only be acquired by the aid of perspective, and without this, outline must ever remain inanimate; but the union of perspective with outline is seldom, if ever, attained, in nations which, like the Chinese, retain merely the early stage of Art; it is ever preceded by colour of a showy appearance.”

So great a lover was Stothard of accuracy, that he used to say he disliked a picture that professed to be a view, or a portrait, if it told a lie. And this attention to accuracy and the simplicity of form at the commencement of study, he deemed the best mode of avoiding affectation; whilst a study of good models (such as those of antique sculpture and the works of Raphael) would be certain to accustom the mind to a purity of style and a feeling of grace that would never afterwards desert it. He exemplified this by referring to an artist of his acquaintance. “Mr. —,” he said, “has as much genius as any man I know, yet he never painted a single historical figure that was natural. His portraits are the same; they are Mr. —’s portraits, not those of his fitters. All his faults arise from affectation. His imagination has run wild, from never having been chastened and well directed by the early study of good masters. He has a certain set of

ideas, too, about colour ; and these he has repeated so often, till he actually *sees wrong* ; yet is Mr. —— a man of genius, but, for want of a proper education in Art, it is my opinion he will never produce one good picture."

I must not omit the mention of a circumstance which will serve to show how greatly, in the action of the human figure, was grace studied by Stothard, wherever it could be found. In the earlier part of his life, he was much in the habit of frequenting the opera,



Bacchanalian subject. Drawn on wood by the late Mr. Stothard, and recently engraved by J. Thompson.

on purpose to make sketches of Monsieur and Madame De Hays —dancers whose grace, he said, was inimitable. He had never seen anything like it in dancing. It was the grace of antique sculpture thrown into action. Slight and rapid as were the sketches he thus made, he considered them of great value, as hints for design.

Highly as Stothard estimated the colouring of the old masters (and no man was ever more deeply imbued with their spirit),

Rubens was his chief favourite for colour. He considered him likewise as the finest painter of the horse. There is so much *action* in the horses of that great artist; they are living, moving creatures—not statues; nor do they appear as if they had been copied from animals led out from the stable, and standing to be painted—the common fault with many, even the best, horse painters. The richness of Rubens as a colourist, he thought, surpassed every other master in ancient or modern times. His pictures, indeed, glow with power; yet are they so finely harmonised, that they never appear gaudy; no colour in them, however bright, stares upon you; and it is only by turning to other finely painted pictures, that you are made fully conscious of his surpassing and wonderful richness—a richness entirely sobered and blended into a due equality with every part, even in his most gorgeous works. His pencilling also is fine; he is now and then careless in his drawing; and in *form* he drew his ideas of beauty too much from the Flemish school. In this respect many of his female figures want delicacy; they are often gross in their proportions, and convey, therefore, ideas of voluptuousness. Unquestionably in form, delicacy, and grace, Rubens could not approach Raphael. The women of the latter were never meretricious. He was quite a Catholic painter: all his Virgins and Holy Families, and indeed all his women, convey the most refined ideas of feminine tenderness and purity. Raphael was the painter for the church, Rubens for the palace and the banquet.

Stothard's partiality for richness of colour made him a warm admirer of Sir Joshua Reynolds. He said that the inequalities of Reynolds—some pictures retaining their colour with all its brilliancy, whilst in others it was faded or gone, or partially so,

even in several of his best works—arose from Sir Joshua's having unfortunately a fondness for experiments in compounding and preparing his own colours; so that he indulged in many tricks, and frequently employed materials in painting (wax, for instance,) that would not stand exposure to the effects of time, and light, and air. The portrait of Mrs. Hartley, that exquisitely beautiful woman (an actress in the days of Palmer and Garrick), where she is represented as a Bacchante crowned with vine-leaves, may be considered as one of the richest portraits for colour that modern times have produced. Stothard was delighted when all the works of Sir Joshua were brought together and exhibited, above twenty years ago, at the British Institution in Pall Mall.

He was very sincere in his praise of his contemporaries; he spoke as he felt, without any personal feeling respecting their works. Some of the landscape artists of his day were the frequent theme of his praise. Callcott, for instance, he greatly admired; and several of the earlier paintings of Turner, he said, wanted only the mellowing effects of time to be equal to Claude. I recollect his saying this of one picture in particular; I forget what it was called, but it was, I believe, exhibited at Somerset House. I shall not here attempt to enumerate all the artists of his own day, of whom I have heard him speak in terms of praise, except it be to mention his great estimation of Robson, whom he considered the most poetical of all the water-colour painters.

Of Barker, the earliest painter of the panorama, Stothard spoke in terms of the highest praise. He more especially admired his views of Elba, Athens, and the Bay of Lisbon. The effect of the evening sun, and the aerial tints in the "Elba" he thought truly astonishing; and never had the magnificence of ocean been so



depicted as in the "Lisbon;" the action of the waves which furrounded the spectator (who was supposed to be on shipboard) was wonderful; and of "Athens" there could not be made a finer picture. Stothard deemed it a national loss that these efforts of the genius of Barker were not preserved by the country.

Of Harlowe (who died so early that he may be said to have quitted life almost at the age many young men begin their career in Art) I have heard Charles Stothard frequently declare that it was his, as well as his father's opinion, had that extraordinary genius been spared, he would have become one of the first portrait-painters that this country had ever produced. Harlowe's age considered, what he did was truly wonderful. He possessed the very rare talent of combining the conception and the arrangement of the historical with all the qualities requisite for the finished portrait-painter, without the slightest sacrifice of fidelity to his imagination. His eye for colour was excellent, and he could be as graceful as an old master of the Italian school; nor did he want simplicity—witness the portraits he painted of the Misses Sharp, small size, at the time they were so celebrated as youthful performers on the harp, in the musical world of London.

Stothard's praise of contemporary talent was not confined to those who followed the Arts as a profession. He took a great interest in looking at the sketches of private persons. I have seen him dwell over the pages of the sketch-book of a friend, with an attention that would have been refused to it by a more ordinary mind.\*

\* To show the interest he felt in talent for drawing wherever found, I cannot avoid mentioning the following circumstances:—A nursery-maid to some of my brother's

children, whose name was Sophia, had so strong a natural talent for design that she would get pen-and-ink, a pencil (or even burn pieces of wood in the fire if she could

But his was ever observant; always collecting and storing images and ideas, so that the slightest sketches of scenery conveyed to him either actual knowledge or food for reflection. He took a more particular interest in looking over sketches of foreign scenery, &c.; and, amongst others, executed by private persons, I remember he mentioned the drawings of Lady Callcott (late Maria Graham, the authoress,) and Mr. Nesfield, of the Royal Engineers, as having afforded him very great pleasure. He spoke of both in terms of most sincere commendation.

An instance of his kindness to young artists of merit must here be told. One day he met the elder Lewis,\* when his son (since known as "the Spanish Lewis"), then a very young man, had exhibited at the Royal Academy his picture of *The Monkey at the Glass*. Mr. Stothard congratulated the father, and told him that on first seeing it he thought his son's picture was by Landseer; and that it was so beautifully and delicately painted, it was worthy the good situation in which it had been hung in the Great Room. In lately adverting to the circumstance, which Mr. Lewis always remembers with grateful feelings, he remarked that Stothard was an amiable and highly-gifted man, far above flattery; that what he had

get nothing better), to draw with. Her sketches were the conceptions of her own mind, sometimes from what she had read or had seen. The late amiable Henry, a son of Stothard, took some of these sketches to his father. The great historical painter looked at them with the deepest interest, and declared they evinced genius of a surprising order. Nothing could exceed his astonishment when told by whom they were produced. The poor girl soon after went

to America. I was told she used to say that she would give all the world to learn to draw properly, and to devote her attention to it for a livelihood. She was in every respect a most deserving character.

\* The elder Lewis is known to the public at large for his engravings; but those well acquainted with the West of England feel that his drawings from Devonshire scenery, in truth of character and beautiful effect, are unique in their class.

said was exactly the result of his own convictions, and he felt it proper to express them to the father of a rising young artist of talent.

Stothard was always ready to receive with the utmost kindness and patience any suggestions of his friends, and to listen to them with good nature, even when they were wholly opposite to his own views. Of this the following is a very interesting proof. He was told by some one that it was the opinion of many, he did not finish his pictures sufficiently to satisfy the prevailing taste. On hearing this, he replied he would give a picture that should be more finished, but added, there was a lamentable want of feeling with the public, in respect to his ideas of Art. "I study nature," said he; "she is the best guide. There is a perspective both in colour, and light, and shade, as well as form, that is not sufficiently studied by the generality. In the present day, although an object be at a distance, it must be made distinct; this is called Art, but I call it a very vitiated taste. This accounts for much of that hardness and rigidity of style now so often seen; and for that prettiness which is no other than miniature painting in oil. There are some students at the Academy who will sit down to a hand or a foot and work over it for a month or six weeks. That is not what I consider a study of the antique, but a waste of time; a labour by mechanical effect to produce a high finish. I know that when the drawings of the students are brought before the council, Sir Thomas Lawrence very closely examines the extremities of the limbs. But let them study well the outline of the figure, under its varied characters by position, and they will become familiar with form. And as to light and shadow, let them take a ball for a model, and it will teach them light, shadow, and half-tint to perfection."

The picture he produced, in accordance with the promise thus

given, was his celebrated *Fête Champêtre*; the dimensions were about five feet by four feet. It was exhibited at the Royal Academy and greatly admired; but was considered not to have sold, in consequence of the old and ugly frame in which it was hung up. The price placed on the painting was three hundred guineas. Such a price was very unusual with Stothard; although had the sum been doubled, it would not have been considered much in comparison with the demands of many of his contemporaries. Judging by the customary very moderate terms of Stothard, more than by the merit of his works, an amateur baronet, who came to look at the picture with a view to purchase, was absolutely frightened at the price. A lady of true taste and spirit in her patronage of the Fine Arts, judged, however, very differently of its value.

Sir John and Lady Swinburne had long been known amongst their most intimate friends as an example of conjugal attachment, observing towards each other throughout life, not only the most warm affection, but much of that attention and delicate courtesy which is too commonly confined to the hours of courtship alone. They always kept their wedding-day; and as both were fond of the arts, and had a very fine gallery of paintings, it was their custom to mark the return of the happy day by adding a picture to their collection. The anniversary was once more near at hand, and Lady Swinburne determined that she would on the approaching festival surprise Sir John, by a gift that should be purely one of her own choice. She had a just sense of Stothard's merits, and accordingly drove to his house and requested an interview.

She was ushered into the drawing-room, where stood the *Fête Champêtre*. The picture instantly struck her — so bright, so beautiful, such a joyous aspect about the whole, yet so mingled with

repose ; in those long green avenues, where (whilst some of the company were seen basking in the warm air of the sunny foreground) the lovers, and the young, and the lovely, were seen gliding beneath their embowering shade—a picture of love, and festal joy ! what could be more appropriate ? Lady Swinburne paid the three hundred guineas without a remark, except one of satisfaction, bade a kindly adieu to the venerable painter, got the picture conveyed into her carriage, and so well contrived was her plan, that Sir John neither knew of the purchase, nor that it had been removed to his house. The wedding-day came ; the table was spread, the festive party assembled—dinner was ended, and the usual health and good wishes to the promoters of the feast heartily pledged by the numerous friends and guests, when Lady Swinburne invited Sir John to accompany her to the gallery, followed by all present : and there with triumphant delight did she lead him to the Fête Champêtre, the beautiful work of Stothard, and requested he would accept it as a precious addition to his gallery, and as a memorial of the day.

## CHAPTER VI.

Stothard's mind contemplative—His opinions of beauty—Remarks on expression—Mrs. Fitzherbert and Mrs. Siddons—His drawing of the latter—Flaxman's cast of her face—Stothard's want of popularity—whence it arose—Sir Joshua's remark on the genius of Stothard—His study of Raphael—Similarity and imitation—His pictures in the school of Watteau—His *Sans Souci*.

STOTHARD's mind was of a contemplative order. There was not a subject, either in real life, or in written record, to which he turned his attention, without thinking upon it deliberately and originally. All his opinions were those of a dispassionate and enquiring spirit. But it is such as are more immediately connected with his own pursuits, that it is the object of these pages to preserve from oblivion. His opinions of beauty, therefore, must not be forgotten, and they were not of the common order of thinking, for his ideas on the subject embraced a much larger extent than is usually acknowledged as belonging to it. "I see more beauty," would he say, "in faces that are looked upon by others as having no claim to it, than most persons would suspect." Stothard considered that the highest order of beauty in a human face is derived solely from its expression. Plato said that the emotions produced by beauty on the mind, arose from a remembrance of supreme perfection. He probably said this in connection with the spirit or soul, because it is that which animates the countenance.

Regular features and beauty of complexion, will not alone awaken interest; there must be something more. The mind must give that action to the countenance which we call *expression*; yet mere beauty to please the eye, without interesting the feelings, is common enough. On being asked, in what he considered the more common order of beauty to consist? He replied, In youth and health; where those are found, unless there is a great perversity of nature to render the features really disagreeable, there can hardly be other than some claims to beauty; for there is a great deal of grace in nature. "I see it," would he say, "in everything."

This is a most just observation of Stothard, and the painter who has studied beauty in all its details, as well as in its more striking forms, sees its existence where a common eye would never trace it; like the practised eye of the mariner, who can detect the distant sail which is totally obscured to the landsman who turns his gaze in the same direction. That a lover sees beauty in a mistress which no one else can find out, though a remark generally accompanied with a smile, has nothing absurd in it, she must have qualities which please and interest *him*, or he would not love her. Those qualities convey character; or give expression to her countenance; and, by the association of his own ideas, that very expression renders her more agreeable to him than to any other person. She possesses what he likes and admires. He feels she does so, without analysing his own heart minutely to discover wherefore; she is really beautiful to him, therefore, though she may not be at all so to others, who neither value such qualities in her, nor can call them forth, nor can respond to the expression of them, as he does; for, the great mystery of love, after all, is very simple—the sympathy in being loved proving irresistible. To



meet with one who understands our heart, and loves us, for what it finds in it, will win almost every heart, not previously devoted to another; and will, in our eyes, give beauty to the homely face, grace to the simplest action, and convey even an interest to those years which have passed the date of youth.



The Sunflower and the Ivy. Engraved about 1763.

Hence arise all the anomalies, the wonders, and the strange chances of that heart-hallowing affection—love.

As I once conversed with Stothard about certain celebrated Beauties, he said many who were esteemed such, did not strike him; because they wanted an expression of sense and feeling—their countenances were like blank books, very fair, but nothing to be read in them. He liked a face that had matter in it—that promised a rich mind or

a warm heart. He neither liked a foolish woman nor a cold-hearted woman. The last, indeed, is ever repulsive—something contrary to what Nature intended should be the principal distinction of her sex ; for we look for love and tenderness in a woman, as we do for warmth in the sun. In other respects, Stothard, though he preferred the elegance and grace of Raphael's female figures to the portly dames of Rubens, so far agreed with the Flemish painter as to think stoutness an advantage to beauty, unless in the very prime of youth. Indeed, nothing impairs beauty so much, and nothing shows age so soon, as *leanness*. A very thin face may retain all its expression, if there is mind in the person ; but thinness conveys an idea of ill-health, wasting, and suffering, and that always gives pain. In the countenance of a sneerer, *leanness* in a great degree becomes hideous. Look at the portraits of Voltaire !

When speaking of beauty of the uncommon cast, he said that the two greatest beauties he had ever seen were the celebrated Mrs. Fitzherbert and Mrs. Siddons. The former, even late in life, was dazzling in her attractions ; Mrs. Siddons in person was commanding, yet of such exceeding delicacy when young, her beauty was much greater off the stage than on it. Stothard said that he had made a drawing of her soon after she became so distinguished in London. Till he went to her to make his drawing, he had seen her only on the stage, and was surprised to find how infinitely more beautiful she was in a private room than at the theatre ; but she had the finest union of feature, grace, and expression he had ever seen. He thought, as did all who knew her in private life, that there was a great deal of worth in Mrs. Siddons. Her own mind was truly noble, and there can be no doubt that made her acting so. She was exceedingly modest, not prudish in her manners and conversation ;

grave and dignified, because dignity was the character of her mind and of her person. Those who could not understand her, and seldom saw such natural majesty in any one, set it down for theatrical; many, therefore, said she was always an actress, off as well as on the stage. But it would have been as out of character in her to have formed her manners by those of the ordinary rate of persons, as it would be in a very tall woman to walk stooping, in order to bring herself down to the ordinary stature of her sex.

Stothard remembered being very much pleased with an instance of the good-feeling of Mrs. Siddons for her brother John. Kemble played (I believe it was his first night in London) the character of *Hamlet* at the Haymarket Theatre. Stothard sat near her box, and declared that he should never forget her anxiety, amounting even to agitation, for his success; yet many said she was of a cold disposition. This could not be true; and here her generally calm demeanour was again misunderstood and miscalled. Mrs. Siddons had a fine taste for works of Art. She modelled; and the subjects that in painting and in sculpture interested her the most, were always those of grandeur. She had nothing that was common about her, yet she was entirely free from affectation. Nature made dignity her sphere, and she was content to be natural. No one could have entertained a light thought in the presence of Mrs. Siddons.

I observed to Stothard that she always appeared to me to be the finest possible subject for a statue; that I should prefer a statue of her to any painting, yet I had seen none—a bust of her was not enough to convey a full idea of her surpassing majesty. Stothard was pleased with the observation; and when, some little time after, we went in a party from the house of the painter to see Flaxman's

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studio, we there saw a very fine plaster cast of Mrs. Siddons, that had been taken from her face.

When a man of great merit has been long overlooked, and comes at last to be noticed, you hear the world wonder how he could have remained so long obscured. I have heard this observation often applied to Stothard, since his popularity has been becoming as extensive as it deserves to be. For my own part, I see nothing surprising in it. Many were the circumstances which, when combined, were quite sufficient to prevent immediate popularity. One of the greatest was, that Stothard never gave himself the trouble to shine at Somerset House in a way so as to arrest public attention. He very rarely painted a moderately large picture; a *very* large one, on a scale such as I have seen by Rubens, at Antwerp, I believe he never did attempt; yet that he possessed the power to do so, and in a most masterly manner, is proved by his noble and almost colossal paintings on the staircase of Burleigh House.

The public, in order duly to appreciate an artist at the Exhibition of the Royal Academy, require to have something imposing before their eyes—something which, either from size, subject, or colour, compels them to see it. It is well known that artists who make the greatest figure there, paint their pictures, generally speaking, expressly for the place; and, in order to arrest attention, I have heard many of them say that they are “obliged to paint up to the Exhibition tone,” not from choice, but necessity, else would their pictures be at once overpowered (*killed* is the artist’s term) by the host of staring, gaudy subjects that hang around, and come in immediate contact with a sober-coloured and natural painting. Stothard, even to gain popularity, never would condescend to paint up

to the tone of the Exhibition. So much was he opposed to what he called artificial means of producing effect, that when the day came for the members of the Royal Academy to varnish their pictures, after being hung up for the Exhibition, it was only by the greatest persuasion he would consent to varnish his at all; saying, that he did not approve such helps, every picture should be painted so as to produce its due effect without them.

His colouring in many of his pictures was as rich as it possibly could be, but never glaring, never extravagant, never like a tailor's pattern-book—attractive by violent opposition of black, white, blue, and red. I have heard him remark, that, even a portion of Nature herself, so surrounded by glare, would be killed, just as the delicate roseate complexion of a blooming girl is rendered pale and dim, if viewed in the midst of lamplight, or in a room of gaudy, artificial accompaniments.

Stothard's practice was never to paint a picture for Somerset House, but when the time came for sending in, to take almost any that lay about his painting-room, or that was hanging up in his drawing-room, for which he happened to have *a frame that would fit*, and to send it off for the Exhibition. Some of these were so small that they were often scarcely visible in the surrounding combination of large canvasses and broad gilt frames; and that harmony and repose, that truth of colour, which was so beautiful and so perfectly natural in him, was in a moment overpowered by the meretricious glare of the place.

Many of Stothard's friends pointed out to him the policy of consulting a little more the taste of the public at the Exhibition, and wished to prevail with him to paint a picture expressly for that atmosphere; but he never heeded them. He would not step an

inch out of his way to gain *popularity*, when he was fure of *fame*; and so little had he of the tact of the world within himself, that he never could comprehend its utility. He had not one thought that was worldly in his own mind, and never, therefore, painted for money as money. Painting was his profession, and if he gained by it sufficient to live respectably, and to leave something to his children at his death, he was satisfied; but he never made mere pecuniary return the object of any one picture that he executed. Had he done so, and possessed more worldly tact, it is well known he might have died rich; for he had always more to do than he could execute without the most unwearied application, so much was he at all times estimated by the publishers for the varied power of his imagination in the art of illustration and design.

In painting, as in literature, we sometimes see that if the artist pursues only the quiet, unobtrusive mode of presenting his works before the world—if he is not thrust into notice by himself or by his friends—if no great patron takes him by the hand, and his name is seldom seen in print; these circumstances will combine to his present injury, since his fame cannot spread whilst he is too little noticed to be known to more than the favoured few. But time will do him justice; and though the earth may have closed over him ere this take place, his reputation will not eventually suffer. The genius of Stothard—though it can only be said within the last few years to have been spoken of, as it deserves to be, by the public at large—was, from a very early period, duly estimated by men of real judgment, whose praise is often the long forerunner of public fame.

Of such exceeding beauty were Stothard's early designs, that when Sir John Hawkins, who was about to edit and republish the old

drama of Ignoramus, applied to Sir Joshua Reynolds to design the frontispiece for the book, Sir Joshua referred him to one who was then but a rising artist, saying, "Go to young Stothard, he will design it much better than I can." Stothard always spoke of Reynolds as the master who revived the art of painting in this country as a national one, and who was the first to raise it from that low ebb into which it had sunk during the reign of George II., and at the commencement of that of George III. The foundation of the Royal Academy, under the patronage of the last-named sovereign, gave that opportunity and impetus to talent which has since been attended with such happy and promising results. Fortunate was it for Stothard, that, even before the foundation of the Royal Academy, there was established, *pro tempore*, the Academy of Arts, where young men had an opportunity afforded them of copying from the antique. The rooms of this institution were situated, as already noticed, in Maiden Lane; and there he practised with indefatigable industry.

About that time, and before he had so deeply studied the works of Raphael, he executed some drawings and paintings that remind one a good deal of Mortimer. The last named artist was unquestionably a man of great genius, and there was an imaginative character in all his works very likely to fascinate a young student, so as to become a follower in his school, ere his mind was thoroughly imbued with the spirit of the old masters. After his intense study of Raphael, the most rapid and remarkable improvement may be traced in Stothard's early designs; some of which, for simplicity and beauty, were equal to any of his latest compositions. Though to be considered an *imitator* generally implies, at the best, but a very doubtful praise, yet he had felt pleased



when, in early life, he had been occasionally told that he imitated Raphael. He was pleased, no doubt, because he knew what those who told him so really meant by the word *imitator*, though they did not exactly use the right term to explain their meaning.

In all arts, as in all things of human acquisition, skill and perfection do not fall down from the clouds upon our heads; we must work hard to get them; and in order to attempt excellence, we must begin by studying what is excellent. To study a great



Pocket-book Vignette for 1893.

painter (as a writer reads over and over again a great author), in order to become so thoroughly imbued with his spirit that the student may, in a very considerable degree, learn to see and feel as he saw and felt (if he have in himself the true capacity of sight and feeling), is wholly different from mere servile imitation. Mere imitation, in anything, is like the portrait painter who catches only the outward markings and peculiarities of the features of his sitter; such as the prominent nose, mouth, or chin; but who gives not one particle of the spirit which is within, that conveys life and expression to those features; in short, he gives not one of those graces that emanate alone from the mind. Hence arises the marked difference (and they are wide asunder) between *similarity* and *imitation*. In literature, and the fine arts, similarity denotes kindred in genus, imitation only in the resemblance of species; *similarity* was what Stothard gained by his close study of Raphael, and that severe schooling of his own judgment which was ever after so conspicuous

in all his works. He was also a great admirer of the gay, the graceful, the festal spirit of Watteau; and his own paintings of



Sans Souci. From the *Bijou*, published in 1827.

what he termed *Sans Souci*, and the characters of Boccaccio's *Decameron* regaling in the garden when about to listen to the

recital of the first tale, for airiness and grace, and beauty of colour, are equal to any of Watteau's productions.\*

I have already mentioned, some of Stothard's earliest works were his embellishments for the *Novelist's Magazine*, published by Harrison. They were generally very well engraved: the designs were most beautiful, in that chaste and graceful style which he had brought to such perfection. These designs formed an era in the history of book illustration, by their being the first which supplied good drawings and engravings to the publishers. They for ever banished those miserable caricatures intended for illustrations, which we may still see in volumes printed about seventy or eighty years ago.

\* These most beautiful pictures, copied designs, are in the possession of Mr. Rogers, by Stothard himself, from his original the poet, in St. James's Place.

## CHAPTER VII.

Stothard illustrates Bell's Shakespeare and poets—His series of paintings from the former—  
His comic humour—Characters from Shakespeare, the Spectator, and Don Quixote—  
His study of ancient costume—His works found in remote parts of the world—  
Stothard depicts his dream—His Una—Children in the wood—Phyllis and Brunette  
—Raving and Melancholy Madnes—Boadicea, &c.

STOTHARD, in early life, was employed in illustrating Bell's Shakespeare and Bell's Poets. Excellent as were his designs for the first work, he afterwards surpassed them in his most beautiful compositions, painted in oils for some costly edition of the great dramatic poet. Very many years ago, the last-named paintings were collected together and exhibited, previous to being sold by public auction. I shall never forget the delight I experienced on viewing them; they brought all the creatures of Shakespeare's imagination so vividly before one. Admirable as Stothard was in all his designs, he was, I think, greatest when embodying the conceptions of Shakespeare, Milton, Spenser, or Chaucer; nor was he much less excellent when he painted for Col. Johnes, at his princely seat of Hafod, in Wales, his chivalrous series of designs in illustration of Froissart. His genius also displayed its richness and its versatility, in bringing before our eyes the comic adventures of Don Quixote, and his faithful squire, Sancho Panza. Stothard, though a grave and reserved man in general society, and by no

means a great talker (and his deafness rendered him more silent as it increased upon him), was not without that native cheerfulness, and that spice of humour, which is invariably found to be one of the many component parts in the properties that form the mind of a man of genius—it exists even in melancholy minds of this nature—of which we have a proof in the dejected Cowper's inimitable story of Johnny Gilpin.



Tristram Shandy: Dr Slop reading the Romish form of excommunication; from the *Novelist's Magazine*, published 1781.

Such a man may be silent in general company, and cheerless when he does not find a community of spirit, a response of

thought, taste, and feeling in his companions; one half the world may think him eccentric, and the other half may consider him dull, and may feel that though he is not a fool (for no man of genius was ever yet taken for that, even by the most ignorant), there is something about him they cannot understand, cannot assimilate with; yet with those who know him well, who can strike upon the key-note of his mind, and awaken the responsive chord, to whom he therefore unfolds himself in the freedom of social and domestic life, he will, I think, invariably be found to possess either the power of humour in himself, or a very high relish for it in others.\* Stothard had an exquisite feeling for humour; and his *drolleries* (to use the old term of the Dutch school) possessed that nice distinction which rendered them superior to many celebrated paintings of the Flemish artists. His humour never descended to low incident in common life, which often disgusts by its grossness; it may be said that his genius was fine in comedy, but it never sunk into farce.

Stothard was truly *the* painter of the olden time—of early poets and writers; for no artist ever so completely identified himself with the simplicity of their days, with the domestic manners and habits of their period. His mind was familiar with the spirit of those remote ages; he could fall back upon them, and breathe in their air, and move in their warlike, social, rural, or their courtly circles, as familiarly as in his own. His pictures, therefore,

\* The above observations were written before the writer had read that inimitable book *The Doctor*. It is not a little gratifying to find, therefore, that the same opinion on humour being a component part of the mind of a man of genius, is there insisted on in a manner the most striking and convincing.

of scenes and characters, such as were recorded by Chaucer or Froissart, had a truth about them, as well as an imaginative beauty, that gave to each an individual identity, and wanting which no illustration of such works, will ever deeply impress the memory, or assist the mind, in giving, as it were, a bodily and visible existence to the historian and the poet.

As an instance of the wondrous union in Stothard, of the grandeur of his conception, of his airiness, the play of his fancy, and the rich vein of his humour, I would mention his painting (I believe it has never yet been engraved) of *Shakespeare's Characters*.\* I speak of it from memory only—for it is long since I have seen it—yet it is one of those paintings that we can close our eyes, and see again in our mental vision, even in their detail, years after we have looked on the thing itself. I can do so now.

What grandeur is there in that figure of Lady Macbeth bearing the dagger, the fatal weapon with which Duncan, who bore his honours so meekly, was treacherously dispatched by her vacillating husband. She is in the attitude of looking up to heaven, not as if invoking its protection or its mercy, but with something of that grand spirit of defiance, even in sin, which Milton contrives to infuse into the Devil—and Shakespeare into this woman's soul; a spirit that we involuntarily respect (while we condemn and abhor it) for its firmness and consistency of courage; in which we see wickedness taken up in place of a right principle for a high object, but never as the result of a momentary weakness yielding to temptation. Shakespeare and Milton, particularly the former,

\* For splendour in composition and colour, Stothard's *Peace*, which he painted for Mr. Champenown, may also be cited. He received for it 100*l*. It was not a large picture.



possessed the art, in a very wonderful degree, of making us awe-stricken in the presence of their bold bad characters, yet without a single touch of their sophistry being capable of inoculating or corrupting us. We gaze on such beings in their progress of evil, as we do on the fires of a Vesuvius, in full admiration of the almost preternatural glow of the flame, the rolling of the smoke, and the grandeur of the volleying horrors of the eruption, but with an ever-present sense of their destructiveness, their ruinous, their calamitous, power.

And then the darkness and the clouds of the background, which Stothard has harmonised so completely with all that portion of the picture devoted to the tragic muse—to the witches, to Banquo, to Lear, that poor old man upon whose silvered head the pitiless pelting of the storm bursts with such unmitigable fury; yet the hurly-burly without is nothing to those bitter feelings within, which are roused to madness by his unnatural daughters. And there are seen those daughters, standing like statues of pride and hard-heartedness, incapable of bending to aught of earth, or to the common dictates of humanity.

And how beautifully has Stothard formed the union between the tragic and the comic portions of the picture. This is effected by means of those airy figures, those “elves of hills, brooks, standing lakes, and groves,” which belong to the Tempest; those creatures of fancy (which either tragedy or comedy might claim as her own) to call forth the wild winds, the sea fires, or to assist in the horrors of a ship-wrecking storm; or to lead astray, with sport and frolic, the drunken *Trinculo* and his companions. These he has introduced with exquisite skill, so as to form them into a group, which might be termed the neutral band of the picture,

where the subjects of tragedy and comedy approximate, but do not jostle each other by a too sudden contact. The gravity of *Prospero*, his attitude of command, and his lovely daughter by his side, with the ship seen in distress in the background, are delightfully relieved, and saved from being overpowered by too much gloom from the darkening sky, by the bright and curled cloud above, with *Ariel* in the midst, leading on the troop of winged and fluttering spirits, with an airiness and a buoyancy which make them seem as forms of a lighter material than that of flesh and blood. We can fancy that the slightest vapour would render such beings invisible; and that *Ferdinand*, when he listens to their music—the fairy band of musicians unseen — would very naturally with “wonder look about,” and enquire whence might be their strains, of earth or of the air? I always admired this picture, as one of the happiest efforts of Stothard’s imagination. It may be considered like the *dramatis personæ* of a play—an index or introduction to all his other designs and scenes from Shakespeare.

I was one of those who had the good fortune to see them all together, before they were sold and dispersed; and I never can cease to regret that such a collection was not purchased at the NATION’S cost, as national property; for they were, as a whole, the most beautiful series of designs that had ever been produced in illustration of the works of the greatest English poet, executed by the greatest English painter, for such was Stothard. Flaxman agreed in the opinion, and in the wish, that it had been so; and that it was deeply to be regretted such a collection should ever have been scattered. That eminent sculptor purchased some of these pictures, which I afterwards saw at his house. Amongst them was a lovely oil painting, rich as an old master in colour, of *Ferdinand*

led on from the shore by *Ariel* and his train, singing aloft, "Come unto these yellow sands." There were several of these paintings, but not the best, I believe, in the hands of some publisher of London, who purposed (so was I informed) selling them by auction. If he has done so or not, I cannot tell. What a pity it is that some effort is not made by those entrusted with the conduct of the National Gallery, to recover, purchase, and once more bring together, the whole series. Stothard's fancy literally revelled when Shakespeare was his theme. His conceptions of the fairy beings of the poet had in them all the wildness and imagination of their great author, yet so chastened with an attention to probability, in thus picturing creatures and things beyond this "visible diurnal sphere," that his supernatural subjects became natural. Had fairies existed, they would have chosen him as the favoured painter of Fairyland.

I recollect a little anecdote connected with the subject, that is not unworthy to be mentioned, since it shows by what fine springs, what associations in a mind such as his, the spirit of one art connects itself with another. Stothard, though he had been in North Wales, had never heard the harp played alone. In early life I was fond of it, and one evening he begged me to play to him upon that instrument. I did so, and found that the music which most pleased him was such as had in it melody. There was one air that delighted him — Purcell's beautiful "Come unto these yellow sands;" the words from the *Tempest*. This was his great favourite; he could paint from the fancy and feeling it inspired.

Amongst his most poetically conceived designs, in illustration of Shakespeare, may be named Richard's Dream, the night before the battle of Bosworth Field. The ghosts of the murdered, which gather round his couch, whilst they possess him with "thick coming

fancies" of horror and affright, and bid him "despair and die," have in them a grandeur (especially the figure with long drapery in the foreground) that is truly impressive; and the attitude of the



The ghosts appearing to Richard, the night before the Battle of Bosworth Field.

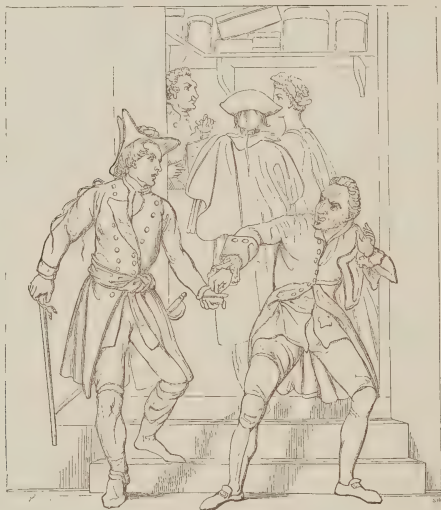
sleeping tyrant, without the slightest violence or exaggeration, shows the struggles of a perturbed mind, for which there is no rest.

In Stothard's illustrations of Shakespeare, his comic humour is of the finest order. It tells the story (as in his Catherine and

Petruchio), and the time of the action, without requiring any reference to the scene in the book. You immediately recall it, so vivid is the expression he conveys to the characters. You know what they were doing and saying at the instant the painter arrested them, and transferred them to his canvas as with a magic wand. His *Falstaffs* are not merely gross, fat old men (as they are commonly painted) whose belly alone says, "I am Jack Falstaff." Nothing can be finer than his discrimination in portraying the knight of "fack and fugar," of mirth and wit, and good humour and knavery. True it is, that in Stothard's *Falstaffs* he strongly preserves the characteristic of the sensualist, but it is refined upon by the air of the gentleman who has known the company of a prince, and the manners of a court. What archness is there in the look, what intelligence in the fly and laughing eye; what a ready playfulness, yet never wholly divested of cunning, does he convey to the entire expression of the head and face. Never but in one instance does this most amusing of knights betray (in Stothard's delineations of him) an unguarded and weak expression; and that is where *Doll* sits on his knee, and he asks her of what stuff she will have kirtles. There even his wit and caution is over-mastered by the cunning of woman; and *Doll* plays with his poll, covered with thin white hairs, as recklessly as did Dalilah with the locks of Samson.

His designs for the *Spectator* also display great comic humour, and the nicest discrimination in delineating character. Of this we have an instance in his Scaramouch's Pinch. How well Stothard tells the story! The noted Parisian perfumer is seen behind the counter, recommending his choice snuffs and scents with a most finical air. In the foreground we see Scaramouch, the famous Italian comedian, who contrives to live, in his days of distress, by collecting

the pinches of snuff which he begs from the box of every purchaser, as he plies at the shop-door, till he collects enough to form his



Spectator, vol. iv., No. 283. Scaramouch's Pinch. Published by Sharpe, 1803.

*Tabac de Mille Fleurs*, and to sell it. At length, greedy of gain, and in too much haste to get rich, he takes so unreasonable a pinch from the box of a Swiss officer, that he becomes involved in a quarrel, and ruins his own trade. The surprised and angry air of the Swiss, the start and affright of the greedy Scaramouch, as he sees the cane about to be raised for his chastisement, altogether give the scene to perfection.

Nor is this inimitable painter less excellent in depicting the solemn air, the high courage and courtesy, the grave and unconscious ludicrousness of Don Quixote, or the broad boor-like mirth, the keen natural sense, and the marvellous credulity of Sancho. Stothard so blends these characteristics in the worthy squire, that you feel, as it were, certain, such must have been the very countenance of the man who, whilst in his sober senses, is yet possessed with a spirit of ignorance so profound, and a respect for his master so incapable of admitting doubt or question where his promises are concerned, that he gives credit to the assurances of a madman whom he sees fight windmills, and do a thousand other acts of insanity every day before his eyes.

Stothard is the only painter who was ever yet fully equal to Hogarth in telling a *continued* story, that required the same characters to be repeated in different circumstances and positions. Hogarth excelled him in being the author as well as the painter of his own tales; for what are Hogarth's pictures but novels, which appeal to the mind, through the organ of sight, without the assistance of words to convey images, events, and ideas? Stothard embodied those already written for him. But that he was equal to Hogarth in telling a story in continuation, may be at once seen in his series of designs for Don Quixote; where we have the chivalrous knight, from his first setting out till the last scene of all, that ends "his strange eventful history,"—his death-bed, with the housekeeper and niece, and the ever faithful Sancho, weeping by his side. I never look at Stothard's Don Quixote without almost fancying he was a real man, and that there was his picture, as he sat for it, before me; for there is most strikingly preserved the same individual likeness, under all chances and mischances, under



all passions and all the diversities of their expression ; there he is the very being of Cervantes, in whose portrait we take the same kind of interest that we do in seeing the likeness of a hero or a great prince who is the theme of ancient story ; such truth of representation in fictitious character is so like identity, we cannot fancy it invention.\*

There are very few of his works but deserve a separate notice ; from their number, however, it is impossible to give it. But I cannot forbear more particularly mentioning his *Jacob's Dream*, as it is one of his most beautifully conceived and chastely expressed compositions. There is a quiet repose in the youthful sleeper, the most easy and natural. The drapery depicted, so as to show the form of the limbs, seems to fall around him, without an effort on the part of the artist. In grace and beauty nothing can surpass the ascending and descending angels, which form the glorious vision of his mind. And how admirably has Stothard shown that Jacob is under the influence of a dream, by the action of the foot ! He fancies that he is ascending the ladder. That flight but exquisite indication is a touch of genius of the highest order.†

\* In commenting on Stothard's power in depicting the scenes of Cervantes, it would be unjust to pass in silence one who likewise so greatly excels in portraying the characters of Don Quixote and his faithful squire. It is almost needless to add to this remark the name of Leslie, an artist whose genius Stothard held in the highest estimation. He saw with delight his *May Day* in the Time of Elizabeth, and how great would have been his satisfaction, had he lived to see Leslie no less excellent in a new walk of Art ! One replete with devotional

sentiment and beauty, in his picture of our Lord and Martha.

† For the following anecdote respecting an attempt made to procure one of Stothard's finest works for the National Gallery, I am indebted to Mr. Alfred Stothard. One of the great painter's most finished pictures was his *Jacob's Dream*, originally painted for Macklin's bible, size three and a half feet by four feet. A subscription was commenced to purchase it with a view to present it to the National Gallery. The picture was then in the possession of

Stothard's study of past ages, in armour and costume, also added



Jacob's Dream. Designed by Stothard for Macklin's Bible, 1791.

much to the effect produced by his designs ; since whatever attire,

Mr. White, Maddox Street, Hanover Square, a printfeller. But the sum required for the purchase could not be raised, though everybody who saw the work declared so magnificent a production ought to belong to the nation. It was at length sold for 300*l.* to Jones Lloyd, Esq., now Lord Overstone.

if for war or peace, he assigned to the different plays of Shakespeare, and other works requiring such attention, it was always that of the period of the history, the story, or suited to the country in which the action of the piece was carried on. He took his armour and his dresses from the unquestionable authority of illuminated MSS., monumental effigies, old pictures, painted glass, and, in short, from any record of antiquity that was authentic and original; and such was his accuracy in this respect (I do not speak of his very youthful historical designs), that I believe he never fell into an error, because he never slighted the means of attaining the most correct knowledge of the subject he had in hand.

So extensive were his designs, in illustration of many, indeed most of the living writers of eminence, that there are few but have had their works adorned by his pencil; and some even inferior authors, who gained an ephemeral success, in this instance had an honour thrust upon them, which was more than they deserved. Several of the novelists, and almost all the poets, historians, and chroniclers of celebrity, have also been decorated with his designs. Engravings from no artist, either of ancient or modern date, have ever been so widely circulated; indeed to such a degree, that perhaps no corner of the globe, however remote, but in some way or other has been in possession of a stray volume, or a print belonging to one, after Stothard. I remember an instance of this that was, some years ago, related to me by his son Charles, who knew well the youth to whom the anecdote refers.

Mr. Daniels, junior (a son, I believe, of the celebrated painter), was engaged by the Government in surveying part of the coast of Africa. One day, on going some distance from the shore into the country, to his extreme amazement, he found one of Stothard's

designs hanging up in the hut of a native African. How it got there, it was impossible even to conjecture.



Fac-simile of a sketch for "Cupid Bound," in the possession of Mrs. Bray. The finished print from this was published by Macklin, in 1787,

His designs for *Gulliver's Travels*, *Peter Wilkins*, the *Arabian Nights*, and the *Pilgrim's Progress*, like those of the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, and the *Tempest*, show how finely he could possess his imagination with the supernatural creations of poetic genius, and how perfectly he could bring them home to the understandings and the feelings of all. I do not, therefore, pause to speak at large concerning the beautiful paintings he executed for that extraordinarily gifted individual, the late Mr. Beckford, of Fonthill,\* though they are so rich in colour that

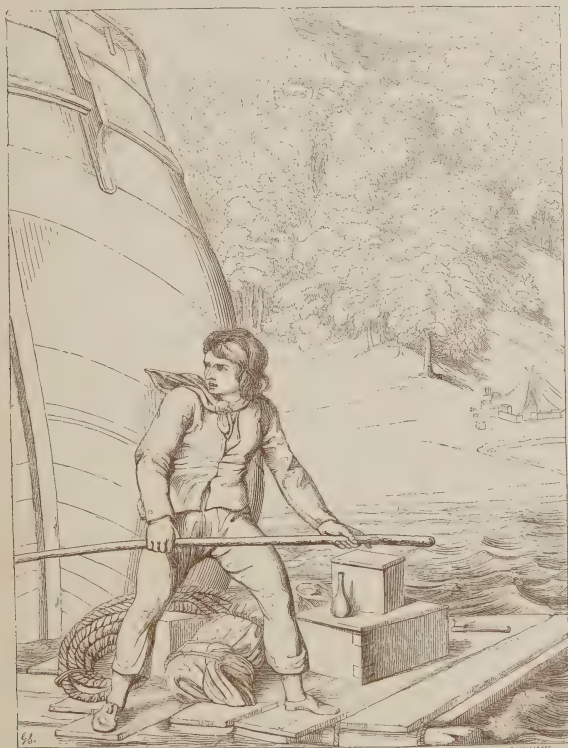
\* In the seventy-fourth year of his age, and nearly fifty years after they were written, Mr. Beckford published his *Letters*, entitled "*Italy; or, Sketches of Spain and Portugal*;" a work which places his name in the first rank of English writers. A more delightful series of letters was, perhaps, never penned.

they need but the mellowness which age gives to the productions of art, as their finishing grace, to render them equal to those of the old masters.

In his various illustrations for books, there are none more truly beautiful than those he made for Robinson Crusoe. I speak of the octavo edition of the novel, published by Stockdale in 1790. Whoever has seen it never can forget the design of Crusoe bringing the things he saved from the ship to the shore on his raft, and the lovely and inviting sylvan scene in the background. I used greatly to admire it; and Stothard said that whoever did so, admired his dream; for whilst engaged on the work for the publisher, he dreamt that he saw a scene more beautiful than anything he could fancy when awake; he had, therefore, endeavoured to throw his vision upon paper.

I must not omit some slight notice of his painting in oil from the Faery Queen, that represents *Una* surrounded by satyrs. This, for many years, hung in the drawing-room of his own house in Newman Street. It has been sold since his death. It is one of the most characteristic he ever produced. *Una*, clothed in white, with her fair and flowing hair, delicate and pale in feature and complexion, appears a perfect image of innocence and sweetness. Miss Boddington was the lovely young creature from whom Stothard painted it, the only instance, that I am aware of, in which he combined the portrait of a living subject with historical design. Nothing can be more graceful than the form, or more expressive than the countenance in this portrait. She is depicted in the crouching attitude in which Spenser describes *Una*, her hands pressed on her bosom, and affrighted by the surrounding wild group who have surprised her in the woods.

In the same drawing-room hung also two or three other pictures by the venerable painter, that won upon the eye and the mind of



Robinson Crusoe on his Raft. Engraved by Medland in 1790.

the spectator, more and more, every time they were beheld. The

first of these was a subject chosen from the fine old ballad of the Children in the Wood; and the second, Elizabeth proceeding to Tilbury Fort to harangue her Troops.

The moment of action seized by the artist for the Children in the Wood, is that in which the cruel uncle, having seated them on a horse before the ruffian to whom he consigns the task of their destruction, places his finger on his lip, and with a dark and sinister look seems to remind the fellow of the foul deed he has promised should be done; whilst his innocent victims, with all the joyousness of childhood, are depicted with smiling countenances, like cherubs in beauty, throwing out their little arms, and looking up, delighted by being seated on the horse's back to enjoy a ride in the forest. Excellent as it is in the dramatic power of the art (for the characters are so appropriately given, that their expression seems to speak their very thoughts), I never could behold this picture without its awakening feelings of compassion for the hapless infants, who found no friend but robin-red-breast to pity their sad lot.

In the other painting here alluded to, Elizabeth is seen on horseback, attended by her nobles and suite, passing on her way to Tilbury. The pencilling of this picture is so free and masterly, that the slightest touch tells in the general effect, and great use is made of the ground of the picture in producing the transparent shadows. The horse on which the Queen rides, in force and action is equal to the finest by Rubens; whilst the figure of the noble, who walks by her side and looks up to her, is so admirably thrown into action, that he seems almost to move as you gaze upon the group.

Amongst Stothard's most characteristic works, may be named



his playful and delicately combined compositions from *The Rape of the Lock*, and his picture from the *Spectator*, where in the story of Phillis and Brunette, the lady mortifies her proud rival, by making her slave wear a petticoat of the same filk which



*Spectator*, vol. i., No. 80. *The Rival Beauties, Phillis and Brunette*. Published in 1803.

the other had chosen for her splendid dress at the ball. The calm, dignified, and somewhat haughty deportment of the triumphant lady; the fainting, with surprise and vexation, of the rival beauty, with the self-satisfaction of the gaily-bedecked slave; are admirably contrasted, and form, like the *Children in the Wood*, a perfect dramatic scene in pictorial art.

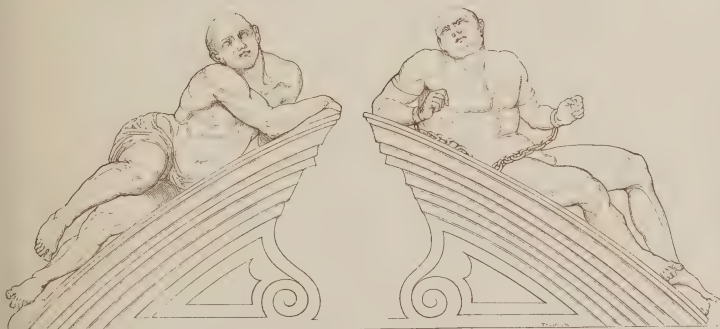
Stothard seldom copied ; but when he did so, he threw something of his own feeling and spirit into the work ; the original lost nothing by being transmitted in a different type by his pencil. It is, I believe, very little known that he made drawings from those wonderful impersonations of Raving and Melancholy Madnefs, sculptured by Cibber in stone, which for nearly a century were exposed to the inclemency of all the winds and storms of heaven, above the gates of the entrance to Old Bedlam in Moorfields. The drawing made from these (engraved for some work of the day) was worthy of the grand and impressive character of the originals. Figures so painfully true, that it is impossible a mind of any feeling can contemplate them, without the deepest sense of fear and awe ; to view man in his most overthrown and afflicted state, portrayed in so vivid a manner.\* Stothard's drawing of these subjects at once reminds the observer of the sublimity of Michael Angelo.

Amongst the earlier works of our Academician, one in the possession of Mr. Nichols, the truly estimable editor of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, must be noticed on account of its curiosity, as a family group of the painter. It is a very interesting oil-painting, on a subject which none, perhaps, but he would have made so : the boys of Christ's Hospital delivering their orations before their governors and a company assembled to listen. The lady in the black cloak is Mrs. Stothard ; the boy speaking is, I believe, her young son Alfred, and the artist himself is seen near her.

\* These figures are now placed under cover, in the new Bedlam, seen only by the visitants of that useful but distressing institution. How much is it to be desired, that the Government, or whoever may

have the power to direct it, should cause these marvellous statues to be removed to the British Museum, where they would be open to the inspection of artists, and to that of the public at large.

Mifs Denman, of Norton Street, has several fine works from his pencil.\* Among them Christiana and her Family, from the Pilgrim's Progress, and a somewhat singular painting, originally designed for a charitable purpose connected with the Foundling Hospital. It depicts a female in despair, meditating the destruction of her illegitimate offspring, whilst Charity, bending over both,



Statues of Melancholy and Raving Madness, executed by Cibber for the Bethlehem Hospital for Lunatics.  
Drawn by Stothard, 1783.

lays her hand on the wretched mother's shoulder, and seems to bid her be comforted, and to commit to her own care the unhappy and

\* This amiable and highly gifted lady (herself well skilled in the art of modelling) possesses also a very large collection of prints from Stothard's designs; mostly selected by her late sister, Mrs. Flaxman, the wife of the sculptor. Miss Denman was considered by him, not merely as a connexion, but as a beloved and adopted child. She was the friend who administered to him kindness and consolation in the hours of

sickness and sorrow, and in whose arms he breathed his last. She was also his sole executrix; to whom he bequeathed all the stores of his genius, the models of and casts from his works, and his numerous drawings both original and collected. The finest of the casts from Flaxman's marbles she has recently presented to the London University College.

innocent babe. The manner of grouping, and the expression thrown into these figures, tell the tale admirably; though, on first considering the subject, it does not appear as if such circumstances could be represented in a picture.

For the late Mr. Robert Balmanno\* (a great admirer of his works) he executed a painting called the *Sans Souci*; a favourite subject with the artist, who made more than one design for it. This was much in the style of Watteau, and a most delightful production. A château was seen in the middle distance; a landscape closed the background; and on a rising foreground appeared various figures in groups, some seated, others walking and conversing; all, indeed, engaged amid this lovely scene of grove and hill, in the enjoyment of social pleasure.†

From the *Decameron* of Boccaccio, he painted ten subjects in the same airy, festive, and bewitching spirit, now in the possession of Mr. Windus, Tottenham Green. They fascinate the eye that looks upon them, as if spell-bound. The structure and magnificence of the buildings, introduced in these pictures, are very striking; and show how fine were his conceptions for architectural design.

One of Stothard's early and most impressive compositions was his *Boadicea haranguing the Britons*. The British Queen stands

\* By the recommendation and praiseworthy exertions of Mr. Carpenter (the keeper of the print-room), all Mr. Balmanno's valuable collection of prints, after Stothard's works, were purchased for the British Museum, and now form one of the greatest treasures under that gentleman's care. They amount, I believe, to nearly four thousand in number. To give a catalogue of them, with a very brief notice of each, would require a volume.

† This picture was engraved in the *Bijou* for 1827.

erect in her car, with all the grandeur of an antique Bellona. She appears, with flowing hair, attired in long drapery, well adapted to display her form. With her right arm raised and extended, and a spear in her left hand, she



Boadicea, the British Queen, animating the Britons to defend their country against the Romans. Engraved by Sharpe.

seems, by her eloquent harangue, to fix in profound attention the hardy and manly race of Britons by whom she is surrounded. Two of their chiefs stand nearest to the car; whilst, seated behind the Queen, are seen her hapless daughters. The one covers her face with her hands, to conceal the violence of

her grief; whilst her sister wears the air of broken-hearted sorrow. Nothing can exceed the feminine grace of these figures, nor the effect produced by contrast between the deep dejection of the daughters and the bold bearing of their mother, who, animated by the spirit of vindictive retribution, would requite their injuries by force of arms. The group of Britons shows great skill in the composition; a multitude appear, but without confusion; all is distinct and intelligible; and not one figure is seen but what is essential to the whole *en masse*. The horses are fine, and in character remind us of the Elgin Marbles. They also partake of Stothard's grace; the one pawing the ground, with a beautifully arched neck; the other rearing. The very flowers in the foreground are introduced with care; and the ornaments at the top of the picture are appropriate. Nothing is neglected.

## CHAPTER VIII.

The Canterbury Pilgrims—The subject suggested by Crome—The characters introduced—Remarks on the same—Hoppner and Stubbs—Schiavonetti commences the engraving of the Pilgrims—Dies—The plate finished by Heath—Stothard's letter on his picture—His Flitch of Bacon—Design for Young's Night Thoughts.

I HAVE now to speak of Stothard's Canterbury Pilgrims, the most popular of all his works, though he has executed many quite equal to it in merit, none perhaps in difficulty. No artist had ever before attempted so full and so elaborate a painting illustrative of the father of English poetry. Indeed, Chaucer had been most undeservedly neglected, both by the artists and the reading public at large, though he was always valued and studied by the few who have a true taste for poetry founded on nature, in the manly and unsophisticated strains of English verse. Though genius such as Stothard's generally selects its own subjects in the highest aims of literature and art, yet it is not a little remarkable that some of the great efforts of the human mind have arisen from the suggestion of others. We have instances of this in Milton and in Shakespeare (if it be true that Elizabeth suggested to him the subject of the Merry Wives of Windsor), in Cowper's Task, and in various other works of no less celebrity. With painters, most of the old masters had their subjects pointed out to them; some were directed to illustrate a particular event in history, in the annals of a noble



house, or to decorate the shrines and altars of the saints with particular passages and occurrences from their lives; and the most distinguished of all Rubens' works, *as a series*, — the Triumphs of the Medici, were painted by royal command.

Stothard's Canterbury Pilgrims owe their existence to the late Mr. Crome, an engraver, who resided near the artist in Newman-street. I first saw the picture at his house, soon after it had returned from Liverpool and Manchester, and other large towns, where it had been exhibited. Mr. Crome said that he always entertained a wish to see a picture of Chaucer's pilgrims on the road, travelling in company together, when they determined to beguile the way by telling stories. He seemed to be quite aware that what might be objected to such a picture was the monotonous uniformity of a procession; and how little such a subject appeared capable of admitting variety in the action of the figures, so as to preserve the natural order of a company of horsemen going along a straight road, without (by an attempt at varying the line of march) becoming either too violent or too artificial for a procession; which, however broken, is still a procession, and has in it something formal. "Who could hope to make anything of it?" was always the cry when it was talked about. But Crome felt convinced that, in the hands of Stothard, the subject was one capable of being made a great deal of, without the faults that were apprehended having anything to do with it.

This work, thus suggested by an engraver whose name is scarcely known (and it deserves not to be forgotten), was undertaken and executed in a comparatively short space of time. It is now before the eyes of every one; for few houses, where the master has a library, or has any pretensions to a love or knowledge of the fine

arts, are without the print, framed and hung in a conspicuous place. Thousands have seen it, both abroad and at home, and everywhere is it equally admired and praised.

In the pilgrims, Stothard has discriminated the characters with the utmost judgment and delicacy of tact, following closely the poet, and never masquerading or grotesquing his creations. There is great merit in this; for *Hamlet's* observation to the players on the liberties they take with their authors is quite as applicable to the painters, who too often do much more than is set down for them, in illustrating the records of history or the fictions of poetry. In this painting the miller, "dronken of ale," who leads on the cavalcade, playing on the bagpipes (an instrument which, in Chaucer's time, was as common in England as it is still in Scotland), appears very careless of the good people to whom he acts as piper, to bring them "out of toun;" his own tipsy music seems to be all that he heeds; his horse carries him as he lists. The host is excellent: Stothard has seized on the moment for representing him when he stops his steed, and holding up the lots in his hand, proposes the recounting of tales, to beguile the time on the road to Beckett's shrine. He truly gives us the man described by the poet, as

"A fairer burgeis is there none in Chepe,  
Bold of his speech, and wife, and well y-taught."

The *Wife of Bath*, who forms a most prominent object in the group, is represented to the life; she has all the joyance and hearty good-will of a blithe and bold spirit, unchecked by any delicacy of sentiment or courtly reserve of manners. She is not nice enough to ride quietly along, as the *Priores* does, in such a mixed company,

but laughs and jests with all around her. She is speaking to the *Pardoner*, who, by the arch expression of his countenance, and his action (that of pointing to the bag of papal pardons that he carries with him, as a welcome commodity, to market with at Canterbury), seems to be cracking some joke with her, and recommending to the jovial dame the indulgent contents of his holy bag. The painter himself used jocosely to say that he liked occasionally to take his stand near the *Wife of Bath*, listening to some of her pleasant and witty sayings. "You will find me," he said, resting by the bridle of her steed." It shows great judgment in Stothard that he has not represented the *Wife of Bath* as a gross or disgusting woman. She is to Chaucer's party what Ninon de L'Enclos was, some centuries after, to the court of Louis XIV.—a refined voluptuary, delicate in appearance, not in mind or manners. She rides, like the Muse of Comedy, light and gaily along.

To the *Wife of Bath* Stothard has well opposed the *Lady Priorefs*—the most minutely drawn, and perhaps delicately shaded and relieved of all the poet's characters in the Pilgrimage. She sits her horse with a quiet and graceful ease; and appears to be engaged in conversation with the nun who is her "chapellaine." Her attitude, person, face, air, and dress, are in exact agreement with Chaucer. As we look on her we see a gentle and a modest lady in holy bonds—"a *Prioreffe*,"

"That of her smiling was full simple and coy,  
Hire greatest oath n' was but-by Seint Eloy."

Chaucer enumerates her accomplishments admirably, from the style of singing the service in the church, to her French, which was derived from the fashion of her day—

“Entuned in hire nose ful swetely;  
And French she spok ful faire and feftily,  
After the scole of Stratford atte Bowe,  
For French of Paris was to hire unknowe.”

In the days of the poet, the use of knives and forks were reserved for the carver, not for those who ate. The extreme attention on the part of a lady of so pure a mind as the *Prioress*, in the nicety observed by her at table, is particularly noticed by Chaucer; and it shows his careful observation of human nature, since delicacy at meals is not only the distinction of a gentlewoman, but, like nicety in dress, it is one of the never-failing indications of a delicate mind; coarse and absent feeders, and slovenly and negligent persons (though there may be a few rare exceptions) are, for the most part, gross and selfish spirits, for they seldom respect either others or themselves; hence is it that good manners have their silent witnesses in personal attire and in demeanour whilst partaking of a meal at table; and if such manners and observances are not absolutely virtues, they indicate virtues in those who practise them. How carefully did the *Lady Prioress* conduct herself at the social board—

“She lette no morfel from hire lippes falle,  
Ne wette her fingers in hire sauce deepe;  
Wel coulde she carry a morfel, and wel keepe;  
Hire over-lippe wiped she so clene,  
That in her cuppe was no ferthing sene  
Of greffe when she dronken hadde her draught.”

Her humility, her tendernefs and feeling, are beautifully described by Chaucer, and as nicely preserved in the modest air, and the sweet and feminine deportment by the painter. She was lively, too—not a melancholy religionist:

“ And fickerly she was of grete difport,  
And ful pleafaunt and amiable of port ;  
And peined her to counterfeten chere  
Of court, and ben eftatelich of manere,  
And to ben holden digne of reverence ;  
But for to fpeken of hire confcience,  
She was fo charitable and fo piteous,  
She would wepe if that she faw a moufe  
Caughte in a trappe, if it were dede or bledde.  
Of fmall hounddes hadde she that she fedde  
With roasted flefch, and milke and wafel brede ;  
But fore wept she if one of them were dede,  
Or if men fmote it with a yerde fmert,  
And all was confcience and tender herte.”

The temptation to quote Chaucer when we look on Stothard's beautiful Pilgrimage, is almoft irrefiftible. But I muft forbear, and confine myfelf to a few general remarks ; as to expatiate on every character in the piece, excellent as they are, would require a little volume. The Surrey Hills are feen in the background ; and for thofe hills the artift made fketches on the fpot, from the Old Kent Road, near Peckham. The company in the picture, when they begin to tell their tales, are not fuppofed to be more than a couple of miles out of town. They had quitted “ The Tabard,” in Southwark, early in the morning, in the month of April ; a time of year when, if fo fanciful a parallel may be indulged, we may liken Nature to a damfel of fifteen ; opening and blufhing, and difplaying a promife that is too advanced for childhood, and not fufficiently put forth for womanhood ; where the fmiles and tears rapidly chafe each other ; where there is more of fweetnefs than energy, and where gentlenefs and tendernefs give the affurance of a fummer warmth of feeling that is to follow ; like the beautiful flowers and glow of a June day, and an autumn rich in the fruits

and the harvest, which both the previous seasons contribute to make plenteous.

The hour of the morning, at such a time of the year, is marked in the picture by a deep-toned colour ; and the effects of light and shade, of foreground and distance, are in perfect harmony the one with the other, yet so nicely managed, that they are but secondary to the train of figures, nothing being so brought forward, or made of so much importance, as to divert the attention from the characters of the piece ; the eye rests on them at once. The portrait of Chaucer is introduced as one of the company. This was painted from a portrait of the poet, still preserved in the British Museum, and said to be executed by Thomas Occleve, who was Chaucer's pupil. It represents a remarkably handsome man, of a thoughtful countenance, who seems to be observing what is passing around him, but without taking any prominent part in the discourse. This is a touch true to nature ; since, with some few and rare exceptions, men of great genius are the worst companions that can be found in ordinary society. Whilst the world around him are busied in their own matters, or on little and common things, the man of genius is busied in that world only as the bee is among the flowers, to glean the modicum which each individual may supply, to store it in his own hive, and there to build up his fabric of such sweet food, that no man, like no one flower, could fix on or recognise the individual portion that may have been derived from himself, now that it has undergone the change and the refinement and the depositing in those beautiful cells of order and of grace, that are, in the poet's mind, like the waxen caves of the bee, the treasury he forms for himself, and whence he draws forth all his wealth and dispenses it to others.

The *Knight* and the young *Squire* are prominent characters in the picture. The latter rides a beautiful white horse; and by its being introduced in the foreground, relieves the whole group. Stothard excelled in painting the horse; and in this he resembled Rubens. In the *Pilgrimage*, the animals are as various and as characteristic as their riders; and the way in which he has contrived to break and diversify the monotonous line in the procession, without placing any one figure in an uncommon position, shows the very consummation of the artist's judgment. It is a complete triumph over the difficulty that was most apprehended, and one which no man but of the highest order of invention could overcome; for there is no repetition in the picture, and Stothard has, in this instance, contrived to turn a defect of subject into a merit of art. I have only to add, that in the costume of the characters, the most scrupulous exactness was observed. The painter, assisted by his son Charles, collected from manuscripts of the time of Chaucer, preserved in the British Museum, also from monumental effigies, &c., his authority for the armour of the knight and all the other dresses; not the slightest accompaniment was neglected.

In every work of merit, it is of interest to trace the progress of the mind from the first idea to the full development of the subject. In a work of art, though it may gradually be improved in giving variety to the detail, or in those combinations which arise from deliberate consideration, yet it is *the first conception* which invariably gives originality and grandeur. That conception, like the first impulse of the heart, is the result of feeling; called forth by a flight of the imagination which views, as it were at once, the scene of its own creation. With this glorious vision the mind becomes



impressed ; and all that remains for the judgment to accomplish is to arrange the subordinate parts ; and to render distinct the grand combinations which form the whole. Hence is it that the sketches or the first design of some of the finest works of art become so precious ; and hence it is that the pen-and-ink sketch by Stothard of the Pilgrims of Chaucer will here be found of so much interest. But this is not the only one he made for the subject ; I am informed that Mr. Vaughan has, in his collection, another even more curious than the present, which Miss Denman has kindly allowed to be engraved for these pages.

I cannot do better than to close my brief notice of this extraordinary painting, by giving the following extract of a letter from the pen of the late Mr. Hoppner, R.A., on the subject :—

“ In respect of the execution of the various parts of this pleasing design, it is not too much praise to say, that it is wholly free from that vice which the painters term *manner* ; and it has this peculiarity besides, which I do not remember to have seen in any picture, ancient or modern, that it bears no mark of the period in which it was painted, but might very well pass for the work of some able artist of the time of Chaucer. This effect is not, I believe, the result of any association of ideas connected with the costume, but appears in a primitive simplicity, and the total absence of all affectation, either of colour or pencilling. Having attempted to describe a few of the beauties of this captivating performance, it remains only for me to mention one great defect—the picture is, notwithstanding appearances, A MODERN ONE. But, if you can divest yourself of the general prejudice that exists against contemporary talent, you will see a work that would have done honour to any school at any period.”

Nothing can be more true than the remarks thus elegantly expressed, and generously felt, by Mr. Hoppner. Stothard's Pilgrims have, indeed, no fault but their want of age, and that every year will lessen; for though time, both by poet and painter, is represented as an old man, yet for one so aged, he is unquestionably the swiftest runner in the world. In all respects the Pilgrims reflect honour, not merely on the artist himself, but on the school of British art, that such a picture should have been produced by a member of the Royal Academy so soon after its foundation.

One circumstance connected with this work is too remarkable to be omitted. Whilst it was in progress, Stubbs, the animal painter, called on Stothard, and requested to view his Canterbury Pilgrims, saying, he felt a great curiosity to see a picture in which nearly twenty horses were introduced. On looking at it, Stubbs exclaimed: "Mr. Stothard, it has been said, that I understand horses pretty well; but I am astonished at yours. You have well studied those creatures, and transferred them to canvas with a life and animation, which, until this moment, I thought impossible. And you have also such a variety of them; pray, do tell me, where did you get your horses?"

"From everyday observation," replied Stothard; and Stubbs departed, acknowledging that he could do nothing in comparison with such a work. His wonder would have been greater still, had he known, what was the fact, that the Canterbury Pilgrims, like many of Stothard's pictures, was, for the principal part, painted by candle-light.

The celebrated Schiavonetti commenced the engraving of it. He proceeded as far as the etching, which, as all the drawing in the plate depends on it, was a happy circumstance. Stothard



Facsimile of Stodard's first sketch for the Canterbury Pilgrims, in the possession of Miss Deaman

spoke in the highest terms of that etching; the Italian artist had preserved all the spirit of the original; but he did not live to go beyond this delicate and introductory part of the task. Previous to his death, Mr. Cromeck died, and another (whose name I do not remember) undertook it; but he had soon a similar fate with the former engraver; the plate was at length beautifully finished by Heath; it speedily became a universal favourite; whilst the fame of Stothard spread rapidly throughout the country.

The *Canterbury Pilgrims* was exhibited by itself (the admission one shilling each person) at all the great towns in England, and also at Edinburgh and Dublin. The engraving was brought out by subscription (the proofs six guineas, the common impressions three guineas each), it had altogether the most extensive sale of anything of the kind published within the last hundred years; and the picture itself, which ultimately was productive of such golden profit, and in so many ways, was sold (so it has been stated in a letter by Stothard) by Mr. Cromeck for three hundred pounds, to the late Mr. Hart Davis, of Bath; but Mr. Alfred Stothard says, the sum paid for it by the latter was five hundred pounds.\*

The reader will be surprised when he learns how small, in proportion not only to its merit and its success, but to the labour Stothard bestowed upon it, was the pecuniary reward he received

\* When one day, during the absence of Mr. Cromeck, a son of Mr. Stothard was showing the *Canterbury Pilgrims* to the late Duke of Gloucester and Sir John Leicester, his royal highness enquired if the picture was to be sold, and the price of it. On being informed that Mr. Cromeck intended first to have it engraved, the duke

said, after it was engraved it ought not to be sold for less than 500*l*. It has been said, but I know not with what degree of correctness, that the picture of the *Canterbury Pilgrims* has been injured in the colouring, by the strong lights to which it was exposed, whilst being exhibited at so many provincial towns.

for this the most celebrated and popular of all the productions of his pencil. I am aware that since his and Mr. Cromek's decease, a difference of statement has been made respecting the sum paid to him. I had been led to believe it was two hundred pounds, till his son Alfred (since his father's death) assured me it was only sixty pounds. However, I have now a document before me, found amongst Stothard's papers, *in his own hand writing*, which for ever sets the question at rest. It is the rough draft of a letter to a friend, and though the name of the individual to whom it is addressed does not appear, yet, from a passage or two in it, I have no doubt it was written to the late Rev. Mr. Markham, of Bolton Percy, who was a great friend and patron of Stothard, and possessed some of his most beautiful works. As the fact stated in this letter is of considerable interest in the Biography of English Historical Painters, I shall give the extract which refers to the Canterbury Pilgrims entire, though it is in a very rough state. It bears no date.\*

“MY DEAR SIR,

“ \* \* \* I have to thank you for your kind offer of advancing a part, conjointly with other of my friends, who wish me well, as to the publication of the Canterbury Pilgrims. I certainly wish it completed on the score of my reputation, as well as on that of the family of poor Cromek. The sum the engraver requests is three hundred and thirty guineas, to be paid in three instalments; for this, he promises to complete it in fifteen

\* Mr. A. Stothard says, that his father of Doncaster; and another for Mr. Rogers; made *three copies* of the Canterbury Pilgrims. One was certainly for Mr. Benson, for whom might be the third is unknown.

months, from the time he begins it. Mrs. Cromek has (with a view to Schiavonetti proceeding on it immediately) sold Blair's Grave for one hundred and twenty pounds. [Here a few words are torn off the letter.] The plate is in progress, and I think may procure more . . . writing to the different subscribers, with a request of one. . . . If this does not complete the sum, some other means must be. . . . On mature reflection, I am averse to enter into a responsibility for so large a sum as four hundred; nor, between ourselves, am I confident how clear Cromek has stood with the father of Mrs. C. Besides this, I must turn printer's devil, publisher, &c., &c.; and, for a time, quit my professional habits. But, if you please, I will request you to suspend this business to a future time—perhaps, when I see you in town, which I hope will be soon: at present I wish them to try their subscribers. When I undertook to paint the picture of the Canterbury Pilgrims, the price agreed was *sixty pounds*: the degree of finish was left to me at the conclusion of it. In the progress of the work, the subject and design appearing more important—worthy of more attention than either of us at first apprehended, Mr. Cromek himself made the following proposition: That, if I on my part would give one month's additional attention to the picture, over and above what was at first agreed, he would make the sum one hundred pounds. This additional forty was to be paid as soon as he could collect from his subscribers. This he did not do; excusing himself on the score of the expense he was at in advertising, &c., &c. He sold the picture to Mr. Hart Davis for three hundred pounds, or guineas. He then in like manner excused himself as he had done before; and as I received his plea of his success with the public with indulgence, and as the plate was

in progress towards completion, deferred my demand till publication. This I have done in his alleged difficulties. Schiavonetti's death following soon after, put a stop to the work; and from what succeeded to this soon after, I had additional reason *not to urge my demand on the widow.*"

The concluding paragraph shows the kindness of Stothard's heart; that he would not press the payment of the promised additional forty pounds on the widow. Alfred Stothard told me that his father never received it; but that Mrs. Cromek sent him a number of impressions of the plate of the Pilgrims instead of it. Of course he was at liberty to sell them if he could; but Mr. Stothard had neither leisure nor inclination to turn printseller; and there they lay in his portfolio, without, I believe, one being taken off his hands. It is but justice, however, to the memory of both Mr. and Mrs. Cromek, to state that he died in very narrow circumstances; and, it must not be forgotten, this melancholy event occurred before the publication of the print.

It may also with truth be observed, that the very high finish Stothard bestowed on the picture was, on his part, a labour of love; and affords another proof, were it needed, how little he cared for the price, so long as the painting was perfect. To do justice to his subject was always his first object, and the great point of his ambition. He never courted the fashion of the day in his drawings; for though the works of no individual artist have ever been so often engraved (principally in books), yet he never executed one design with a view to attracting in the print-shops.

Before I quit the subject, I must not omit noticing that, by the following extract from one of Stothard's letters, we learn that when



he made two copies from the Canterbury Pilgrims, he not only somewhat varied from the original picture, but hoped he had improved on the general effect:—

“To J. BENSON, Esq., Doncaster.

September 13th, 1813.

“DEAR SIR,

“YOU will think me negligent, not having sent your portrait soon after your leaving town. The truth is, I have been so entirely engaged in copying the Pilgrims for my friend Rogers, of the same size, and one larger for yourself, and for this I put everything aside; and last week I completed the business. As the panel of this picture is not so stout, I have put it into the frame wherein the Shakespeare was exhibited, and well secured it in a good case. It is now on the road to Doncaster, by the waggon from the Bull and Mouth Inn. They tell me it will reach you in a week. I have lengthened the composition a little, and have made some trifling additions, and a transposition in the group of the five citizens; and as to the colouring and effect, I have endeavoured to strengthen both. I hope you will think so when you see it. It will give me great pleasure if I have succeeded to your satisfaction.”—

Many years after (when Stothard was nearly seventy) he designed *The Flitch of Bacon*, which, for form, and size, and subject, becomes a companion to the Pilgrims, though so much later a work.\* The nature of that subject gives an air of festal triumph to every gay figure in the group. Before the young and

\* *The Flitch of Bacon* was a drawing made in sepia; the peculiar effect of which, as a drawing, was admirably transferred

to the plate by the engraver, Watts,—especially in the background.

amiable pair who have won the flitch, is seen a serving man bearing it along. By the side of his horse walk the country minstrels, who head the procession with harmony. Two lovely and sylph-like damsels run before the animal that bears the wedded couple, strewing flowers. After them follows a train of friends and attendants, crowned with garlands,—some mounted, others on foot. The picture is closed by a group of figures who stand as spectators. Amongst these, the painter has introduced himself;—the head is in profile, the likeness faithful. A beautiful young gentlewoman, who stands in the midst with a fan of feathers in her hand, is listening to some remark made to her by one of her own sex, whilst her head modestly inclines downward to avoid the admiring looks of two young cavaliers, each mounted, who close the procession, and who seem to be equally struck by her beauty. One of them is touching his hat to her, with a fixed gaze of admiration; the other bows bare-headed, but appears to look upon her with more diffidence, less in the face. The painter, by these figures, which form a little episode in the story of the Flitch, seems to indicate that between the two young men a future rivalry is likely to spring up for so fair a prize. The landscape, and every accompaniment of the painting, is light, glowing, and exhilarating. From this circumstance, it is a deserved favourite. The dresses of the figures in this charming subject represent the picturesque costume of the time of Charles the First.

I must not omit a slight notice of one of Stothard's most fearfully impressive designs, from Young's Night Thoughts. Death starting up from the table of Intemperance. His mask displaced, with one hand he raises the bowl above his head, and with the other grasps the mouth of one of the revellers, suddenly stopping

his breath; whilst the miserable group around lie overthrown in the midst of their intoxicating riot. Altogether, there is in this treatment of the subject an energy replete with terror and with awe.



——— He drops his mask,  
Frowns out at full; they start, despair, expire,

From Young's Night Thoughts. 1802.

## CHAPTER IX.

Jubilee of 1814.—Temple of Concord.—The Wellington Shield—His designs and models for it—Etches the subjects from his own drawings—Duke and Dukes of Wellington come to see the work—The Shield presented—Stothard's letter to the Duke—Result of an interview with his Grace—Designs for plate, for George the Fourth's Salver, and for the Wellington Vase—Elected Librarian of the Royal Academy, 1817.

ALTHOUGH thousands have passed away since the event occurred, yet are there many still surviving who can remember the grand National Jubilee of 1814, when the Emperor Alexander of Russia and the King of Prussia, the young Princes, with that bluff but brave old General, Blucher, and the Hetman Platoff, visited England, and received a welcome that did honour to the heart and the hospitality of John Bull. It was not then foreseen that the next year, 1815, was to be marked by the crowning victory of the Allied Powers, and the final subjugation of the greatest tyrant that ever lived. A general thanksgiving for what was then considered the conclusion of an arduous and protracted war, was proclaimed; and in July the Regent and the Royal party attended the celebration of Divine Service in the Cathedral of St. Paul's, and soon after (in August, I think,) the grand Jubilee took place.

Amongst other temporary erections designed for Hyde Park, was the Temple of Concord. This, divided into four compartments, was to be painted with transparent decorations by some first-rate artist of the day. From circumstances which occurred,

Stothard fancied he was to be chosen ; but shortly after, the late Mr. Howard, R.A., waited upon him, and told him that he was making designs for the Temple, and wished for his assistance in executing them, as he (Mr. Howard) had been appointed for the task. Stothard felt a little hurt, and delicately replied, that he was himself an historical painter, and never painted but from his own designs ; but if Mr. Howard chose to let him take a compartment, he had no objection ; but he really could not copy from the inventions of another artist. Nothing more was said, and Mr. Howard took his leave.

The Temple was to *revolve* slowly during the evening and night of the Jubilee, so that whatever subjects were painted in the compartments might be seen by all, and the crowd of spectators need not shift their ground. The work commenced, but difficulties arose, and at last it was found that it could not possibly be completed in due season without the aid of Stothard's ready invention and rapid pencil. He was therefore *solicited* to take a compartment, and at once consented ; and (though very little time remained for the execution of it) chose for his subject the Golden Æra, and the Triumph of Britannia, who appeared in a car drawn by four beautiful white horses. The picture was about thirty feet in length.

There was no room in the artist's own house to execute a work on so large a scale. I will not be certain, but I think he painted it in some spacious apartment allotted for him at the Mews. But, wherever it was, in company with some of the members of his family, and my own, and Mr. Constable, the landscape painter, I had the good fortune to see it a day or two before it was removed. Never shall I forget the delight we all experienced at the sight of

such a noble effort of Stothard's genius ; and all agreed it was to be lamented that such a work was to be devoted to an evanescent purpose—the exhibition of a night's rejoicing ! The whole group was fine ; and the horses seemed instinct with life and action. Stothard appeared gratified that his friends were so pleased with his performance ; but little did the venerable painter dream of the mortification which awaited him as his reward.

Who had the direction of *the revolving part of the machinery*, I will not pretend to say ; but, probably from carelessness or error, it was made to turn a contrary way to the heads of Stothard's horses ; so that had the transparency been put up as he painted it, they would have backed Britannia in her car, with their tails foremost ! Stothard's beautiful painting therefore was compelled to be displayed before the public *the wrong side outward* ! It is almost needless to say that it caused the deep, rich tone and colour of the picture to appear feeble, and the outline somewhat indistinct. But, notwithstanding, it surpassed all the other three transparencies, and was by far the most admired. It is the only one that graced the Temple of Concord which has been preserved ; and it now rests in obscurity, I am informed, at Woolwich Rotunda in the Arsenal. It deserves to be still further preserved by the engraver.\*

For some fête given by the Prince Regent at Carlton House, about this period, Stothard also painted a transparency, which was displayed in the supper-room ; but I do not know the subject. I recollect, however, his saying that whilst he was engaged upon it, the Prince, with some Duchesses leaning on his arm, came in, and admired his work ; and, on the former asking him if he were not a

\* A small picture from it was sent to the Exhibition.

German, he replied, "No, your Royal Highness, I am an Englishman."

I do not know the date of the year in which Stothard was employed to make his designs for the Wellington Shield: they form one of his great works. The merchants and bankers of London, at a public meeting, had agreed on presenting a silver-gilt shield to the Duke, as a mark of their sense of his merit as the greatest general of modern times. The subscription raised for the purpose exceeded 7000*l.* A committee was appointed, for carrying out the intention of the merchants, and competition was invited, in respect both to silversmiths and artists. From some of the former, as many as three or four sets of designs, each by a different artist, were laid before the superintending authorities. Stothard, whose genius for design stood above all the artists of his day, in the opinion of all acquainted with his works, was, first or last, applied to by every manufacturer who became a competitor for the shield. From some cause he gave the preference to Messrs. Ward and Green (previously strangers to him), of Ludgate Hill. The artists thus invited without any restriction, were to send in their designs for the compartments of this great trophy, by a fixed day. The subjects were, of course, to be selected from the military career of the victorious general.

Stothard found he had exactly three weeks before him to study the history of the war, to make choice of his subjects, to execute all his designs, and to send them in to the committee.\* To any other than genius of the highest order, perfected by long practice,

\* Mr. Alfred Stothard tells me that his father commenced his task by carefully making extracts from the despatches of the

period, in his own handwriting, and that they filled many pages of a manuscript folio volume.



by having gained a facility in embodying its conceptions, the task to be performed in so short a time would have been impossible. Stothard attempted, and achieved it; and his drawings so infinitely surpassed all competition, that they were ultimately chosen without a dissentient voice.\* Those who have never seen them, can form no idea of the astonishing rapidity with which such a task must have been performed. When I first saw them, well knowing the circumstances under which they had been executed, I was dumb with amazement, though I had long known enough of the mind of the great painter to consider it equal to any object on which its energies might be turned.

It struck Stothard, that The Shield of Achilles (executed some years before by Flaxman), in respect to the arrangement of the compartments, having each a separate subject, would apply with propriety to the work in question. His designs for the Wellington Shield were rather large drawings, and executed in sepia. They commenced with the Battle of Assaye, in the East Indies, conducted the gallant Duke through all his brilliant victories in the Peninsular War, and concluded with his receiving the ducal coronet from the hands of the Prince Regent. These subjects are ranged in compartments, within a wreath of oak twined round the shield. In the centre, the General is seen seated on horseback, surrounded by the most eminent officers engaged in the war. Tyranny lies subdued and trampled under his horse's feet; whilst Victory places a laurel crown upon his head. The wonder of the central group,

\* So great was the interest involved by competition amongst the chief silversmiths of London, that another artist, employed by Ward and Green (the well known Westall, R.A.), received no less a sum than 500*l.* for his *unsuccessful* designs; whilst Stothard, for his numerous, beautiful, and successful series, charged far less.

perhaps, principally consists in the management of the horses. These, full of spirit and animation, are introduced *within the circle*, but without the slightest confusion, or interference with each other. All these evolutions of the chargers emanate from the centre, which is in itself a most original conception, inasmuch as there is no subject that could ever have been thought capable of suggesting such a combination, except it were the Quadriga of the ancients, or the horses as represented on the different gems and friezes of antiquity. But these are seldom, if ever, seen other than in profile; some of Stothard's are in the front view. Even in the Decemjugis, of which there is an instance given in one of Trajan's medals, none of the horses are seen in the front view.

One remark may be added, that unless this group, so arranged and so combined, be the creation of his own genius, it possibly might have been suggested to him by that sublime vision in the Apocalypse, where the heavens are suddenly opened, and the Word of God or Christ comes forth seated on a white horse, followed by the armies of Heaven also on white horses, clothed in white, and about to descend to take vengeance upon earth. Certain it is, that we may say of this group, though it is poetically supernatural, it does not seem to be a violation of nature.\*

Stothard's drawing was the size proposed for the shield, three feet and four inches diameter. It was sent in to the committee at the time specified. But when they were assembled, some of the members (who had, of course unsuccessfully, applied to Stothard to make designs for Rundell and Bridge, after he was engaged with

\* A duplicate copy by Stothard himself, Wellington Shield, is in the possession of Samuel Rogers, Esq., the poet.

Ward and Green), being much interested for Rundell's house, pleaded for more time; as that given to the several artists, was not enough for a fair competition. Three weeks more were granted. But although Stothard's drawings were even then (in their first state) finished, and on the table of the committee-room, he determined in his own mind to profit by the delay. A happy thought struck him; he took them home, and, unknown to all concerned, altered the centre compartment of his design; by there placing Wellington, surrounded by all his distinguished generals on horseback. Victory, as a graceful female, about to place the laurel crown on the victor's brow,—and Anarchy, with the broken sword; Discord, with the extinguished torch; and Tyranny, with his displaced mask and useless dagger, beneath the warrior's feet: these symbolic figures are, in grandeur, equal to Michel Angelo.

But the wonder of Stothard's talents concerning the Wellington Shield, was not confined to the manner in which he executed the designs. It was of course necessary, before the chasing of the silver was commenced, that an exact model of the drawings to be so chased, should be executed as a guide to the persons who were to be employed in so nice a work. A Mr. Tollemach was chosen, but he died suddenly, soon after he was appointed to the task, and some difficulty arose as to who should succeed him; when, to the extreme surprise of all, Stothard offered to make the models himself from his own designs; and, with a rapidity scarcely less extraordinary than his former exertions, and wholly unpractised as he was in this branch of art, he produced one of the most masterly models ever executed of its kind.

The peculiar and *original* means he adopted in the execution of this work, and the beautiful and extraordinary effects produced by

those means, are worthy a record.\* Stothard, in the production of the various masses in the model, employed a *camel's hair pencil*; and with this he laid on the clay in as pulpy a state as possible. Such a process completely answered. It enabled him to give those graceful and flowing lines, whether of the human form, or of the drapery of his subject, with a taste and a delicacy that equalled even the drawings he had made. If painters were surprised by the great conceptions of his genius in the designs for the shield, sculptors were absolutely astonished at the models he had made from them.

These were finished and placed before the persons who were chosen to execute the chasing in the silver: the latter were resident at Camberwell, near London; and here commenced the vexatious and disappointing part of this great work, to Stothard.

He complained that there was no Benvenuto Cellini to catch the spirit of his model, or to preserve it in the chasing of the shield. He offered his services gratuitously to superintend and direct the work. Many a weary journey did he make from Newman Street to Camberwell, and to very little purpose. Repeatedly did he complain of the sad want of knowledge of effect, and deficiency in drawing, found among chasers of silver, who ought to cultivate the art of drawing, in order to enable themselves well to execute the practical part of their own art. He said also, so great was their self-conceit, that (whilst he was endeavouring, by instruction and criticism, accompanying his remarks with delineating what he

\* They ought, indeed, to be known, as they may become highly useful to artists who are employed in modelling. Mr. Alfred Stothard assures me, that such

means as are above stated were never yet even attempted by any artist except his father.

wanted them to understand, whilst at their elbow), instead of attending to him, they would turn aside their heads with the most careless indifference, and never heed him; so that, at the last, he saw the task completed in its chasing with anything but satisfaction. And this it was which first induced him to determine on endeavouring to procure a better record of his designs than the chasing on the shield had produced. He resolved himself to make etchings of those designs, the same in size as the originals. But ere I proceed to the history of the etchings, I must mention two or three other circumstances connected with this national work—for may not a trophy presented to Wellington by the merchants of London be so styled?

I often heard Stothard talk a great deal about it; and I know he agreed in the opinion that a *bronze* shield, though less costly, would have been a richer and more classical material for his designs, and one more likely to go down to posterity; since, in times of tumult and civil strife (and who can say such would never occur again in England?) if they fall into the hands of the rude soldiery, or of the multitude, trophies of this nature are less likely to escape pillage when executed in silver than in bronze. Even a memorial to the Duke of Wellington might be consigned to the melting-pot, if misrule or rebellion once more gained the mastery in our land; for the warlike achievements of Henry the Fifth could not save his head, formed of silver, from the plunder of the godly, who tore it from his tomb in the Abbey of Westminster, when the iron rule of Cromwell had usurped that of a crowned king.

Whilst the shield was in progress, the Duke and Duchess of Wellington did the venerable painter the honour of coming to his house to see it. Unfortunately (though he afterwards had an

interview with the Duke), he was not at home, but his eldest son, Charles, and another received them. They expressed themselves highly gratified with the interview, and spoke of the Duke as a man whose superiority was apparent in all he said. Charles, like his father, was impressed by the strong good sense which marked the character of his Grace. He looked attentively at every drawing; the remarks he made were decided; not as if he came merely to see his actions illustrated by Stothard's designs for them, but to see if the artist understood what he had been about. He was satisfied. The Duke was a gentleman, but with nothing about him of the courtier; the Duchesse was very pleasing and gentle, and seemed fond of the arts.

The shield was finished and presented; and for some time before the ceremony of presentation took place, Messrs. Ward and Green very liberally and obligingly exhibited it by gratuitous tickets of admission at their house in Ludgate Hill, where it was seen by most persons of rank and talent of the day. It was indeed a gorgeous work, but I thought it dazzled the eyes too much, and wished again and again that it had been in bronze. I now come to the etchings.

For some reasons of his own, Stothard did not wish his intentions to get abroad among his brother artists. He determined, therefore, to commence his etching task as secretly as possible, and he did so. The etchings were eight in number. The first gave (in outline only, and on a scale smaller than the original) the whole shield. The second (of the same size as the original, and beautiful for the light, shadow, and half-tint of the etching, as well as for the drawing,) gave the magnificent centre-piece before described; and the remaining six (as highly finished as the centre) consisted

of the various subjects forming the compartments round the shield.

For some time the venerable painter carried on his work unknown to the world of art. At length, by means of the copper-plate manufacturer who supplied him, the late Mr. James Heath, the celebrated engraver, heard of the very large-sized copper-plates that were being sent to Newman Street. His curiosity was excited; and having long been well known to Stothard, he called upon him, and addressed the artist with "Come, Mr. Stothard, let me see what you are about. I hear you have taken up engraving. I was much surprised. The mechanical part of that art is far more difficult than you are aware of, one which you cannot possibly understand. It has its peculiarities, and they are of very great difficulty. But let me see your plates." One was instantly produced; laid before and inspected by Heath. Nothing could exceed the astonishment of the veteran engraver on beholding the work; he expressed his admiration and wonder in the strongest terms; and with how much truth and justice, all who see these magnificent etchings will instantly admit. Strange to say, that of all his works, none are so little known as these plates; and even the few who are acquainted with them seem not to be aware they were wholly executed by his own hand. He told me they had been his winter evenings' amusement.\* I have before stated that Stothard's principal motive for undertaking these plates was a wish

\* Although pecuniary reward has really nothing to do with the merit of a work, and for some of the very finest things Stothard painted, he was frequently worst paid; yet I must not omit stating, that for his splendid designs and drawings for the Wellington Shield, he received *his own demand*—150 guineas; a very inadequate sum for such a work.



to procure a better record of his designs than had been achieved by the chafings on the shield. After he had accomplished the task, he naturally felt a strong desire for protection, and that no other copies should be engraved from the work. This will be seen by the following letters, the rough drafts of which were found among his papers. The first is addressed :—

“TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

“MY LORD DUKE,

“I this morning called on Messrs. Green, Ward, and Green, in Ludgate Street, and from them I learnt the shield had been presented to your lordship. It was for them I made the design, and from them I received permission to make an etching of the same, with a view to publication, as soon, and whenever the shield should be presented to your lordship. As a personal stranger, I feel a reluctance to address you, did not necessity compel me. I now request your lordship’s protection—for without this communication on my part, your lordship might grant to the first applicant your permission for him to copy and publish, and thus overturn all that has induced me to this undertaking; and which has been the labour of years, besides my ready superintendence of the manufacture of the shield, as far as my ability was of service. I now beg to submit to your lordship’s inspection, the impressions from the plates I have etched, and likewise to request your acceptance of the same.

“I am, my Lord Duke, with the greatest respect,

“Your Lordship’s most obedient servant,

“THOS. STOTHARD, R.A.

“No. 28, Newman Street,

“February, 18th, 1822.”

To one of the partners of the firm of Messrs. Ward and Green (but the copy of the letter does not state to which), he writes thus:—

“DEAR SIR,

“After my parting from you last Monday, a thought occurred, that the Duke of Wellington might very possibly be applied to, by some one wishing to publish a representation of the shield, well or ill—an outline; or perhaps in the present fashionable manner on stone, or worse—equally detrimental to my future prospects as a publisher. I was convinced I should be wanting in common prudence, if I delayed another day in getting an interview with his lordship. I have now the pleasure to inform you I have seen him; and he has assured me that no one shall take a copy of the shield to my detriment. The Duke, moreover, particularly requested me to inform you of this determination; and that you would not allow any one to make a copy without his permission; he concluded with this emphatic remark; ‘The shield is now mine.’ Agreeably to this request of his lordship, I take the earliest opportunity of informing you of it.

“I hear that most of the papers, like the ‘New Times,’ have given the particulars of the subjects on the shield, *but without once naming the artist*; an omission very unjust to me, and which you should have prevented. I conceive I can no longer delay my business of publishing, but before I do this, I will, agreeably to your request when I was last with you, forbear taking any steps for a few days. I think this week will be sufficient to conclude one way or the other. The first proposition I submitted to you, has been rejected, as well as that of the second. Of the first I

must confess I do not see the reasons for those apprehensions which withhold you from complying with it. As to parting with the work out and out, it has been ever foreign to my ideas; and now, my good sir, it is surely time we came to some conclusion; and I only delay taking those steps towards publishing, that I may hear your final decision. This you may be assured of is my sincere wish, that the publication should appear connected with Messrs. Green, Ward, and Green, rather than with any other.

“I remain, with the greatest respect,

“Your obedient servant,

“THOS. STOTHARD.

“No. 28, Newman Street,

“February, 20th, 1822.”

It appears from the above, that the Duke of Wellington acted in this matter in a manner worthy of himself towards Stothard. It will also be seen by the latter part of the letter, that the artist wished Messrs. Ward and Green to take some share in the publication; but as he declined parting with the copyright, the negotiation ended; and Stothard published his etchings solely on his own account. This was to be lamented; as he had little or no tact in mere matters of business, and therefore, I believe, the principal benefit he derived from the publication, was the pleasure he felt in giving a few copies to his most particular friends.\*

\* The terms on which Mr. Stothard published his plates, etchings from the designs of the shield, were eight guineas; proofs on India paper (of which only twenty-five copies were printed), six guineas

the proofs, and three guineas the impressions of the ordinary kind. I must not omit stating, that the year after Stothard made the designs in question for Ward and Green, he was employed by the Lord Mayor and

The last day we ever had the happiness of spending with him (it was at his own house) he presented us with the whole series, proof impressions, of those most beautiful etchings. It is needless to say how they are valued, as coming from such a hand, and as one of the last memorials of a connection of years' standing, and one that now awakens the blended recollections of affection, reverence, and regret.



Design for Decanter Label. Facsimile of original sketches with a pen, by Stothard.  
In the possession of Peter Cunningham, Esq.

Before I entirely quit the subject of works in silver, I may as well state another thing not generally known respecting this great painter, that he made many designs for chased plate that were of extraordinary beauty. The principal was for the border of an oval silver, that was executed for King George the Fourth. It was composed of a most admirable group of Bacchanalian figures. He also made another design for a similar work, and for the same

committee of gentlemen appointed to promote the subscription for commemorating the victory of Waterloo, to make a design for a column to be executed in silver, for the purpose of presenting it to the Duke

of Wellington. I learn this by a note amongst his papers, which shows that Stothard charged thirty guineas for that design. I do not know if the silver column was ever executed, but I conclude it was.

Sovereign; and chose for his subject Bacchus and Ariadne, drawn in a chariot by Satyrs. This was imagined and delineated with true classic taste and feeling. All these drawings were most elaborately finished in sepia. He made another masterly set of drawings for the house of Messrs. Rundell and Bridge, of Bacchanals. These were intended for the handles of knives and forks. Amongst them may more especially be noticed the boar-hunt silver-handled knives,\* and in a similar bold style of art, the Stag Hunt was designed by him for plate. I have been informed that all these (except the groups for George the Fourth) were frequently introduced in the ornamental plate of the Duke of Devonshire, and of our chief nobility.

I do not know how soon after his last great victory, The Waterloo Vase was presented to the Duke of Wellington; but it was wrought at the manufactory of those eminent goldsmiths, from Stothard's beautiful designs, and his son Alfred's masterly models. Another work, in connection with their firm, must here be noticed.

Flaxman was accustomed to design and model for Messrs. Rundell and Bridge, prior to 1809. Commissioned by these gentlemen, he produced his fine composition and model of The Shield of Achilles, which, when wrought in silver, was in the possession of the late Duke of York. Flaxman, who enthusiastically admired Stothard as an artist, and loved him as a friend (and in genius and humility of spirit never were friends more congenial), whilst engaged in this great work delighted to show him

\* Sir Francis Chantrey, who many years ago modelled for some time in the manufactory of Rundell and Bridge, there made

models from these designs of Stothard, for the boar-hunt handle knives.

the models of the various compartments, to consult with him upon them, hear his opinions, and often to profit by them. One of the partners (the late John Gawler Bridge, himself a skilful artist,) was so much delighted with Flaxman's composition, and wishing to combine, as it were, the peculiar grace and force of Stothard with the sculptor's classic taste, that he commissioned the former to make a drawing of his friend Flaxman's shield, the size of the original. This was done in sepia, and highly finished.\*

The next event to be mentioned is that in 1817, on the death of Mr. Birch, librarian to the Royal Academy, Stothard's friend



Design for Decanter Label. Facsimile of original sketches with a pen, by Stothard.  
In the possession of Peter Cunningham, Esq.

and neighbour, Mr. Benjamin West, persuaded him to become a candidate for the office; to which he was unanimously elected. Whilst holding it (which he did till the day of his death) Stothard suggested many improvements for the library, that were adopted by the council. He likewise kindly interested himself for the benefit

\* On the death of Mr. Bridge, this magnificent drawing by Stothard, and his splendid design for the Bacchanalian Salver for George the Fourth were sold at

Christie's, with all the contents of what was called "The Flaxman and Stothard Folio." Mr. White, of Brownlow Street, Bedford Row, bought the first-named drawing.

of the students, aiding them by his advice and assistance in their pursuits.

During the successive summers of 1816 and 1817, he visited his old friend Archdeacon Markham, at his rectory of Bolton Percy, when many of the tasteful architectural embellishments, which he had planned, were executed.



Nymph holding a flower.



## CHAPTER X.

Stothard engaged to paint the ceiling of the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh—His letter on the subject—Goes to Dovedale to make drawings in illustration of Walton's Angler—Extracts from his Journal—Designs for the frieze of the New Palace, and for the Throne-room—George the Fourth's remark on Stothard's unchanged powers—Designs for sculpture—The Children in Lichfield Cathedral.

IN the year 1821, Stothard received the first intimation of its being the wish of some of his friends in Scotland that he should paint the ceiling of the Advocates' Library at Edinburgh. He says, in the rough draft of a letter now before me, that his friend Mr. Flaxman, on his return from the North, "with his usual zeal," communicated this to him; and in the fragment of another letter, addressed by him to Mr. G. Thomson, of Edinburgh, he writes, that he finds, by Mr. Flaxman's return from that city, the sculptor had there been engaged "in the meritorious work of meditating a situation for the statue of Burns." Stothard adds, "I sincerely wish you joy on your choice of the sculptor, for I do assure you that you have the best in Europe now living; a bold word, when we hear the cuckoo praises applied to others, his inferiors, for none are his equals for grand and simple composition."

In the autumn of 1821, Stothard visited Edinburgh, in consequence of the offer being regularly made to him that he should undertake the work named. In the next year he commenced and

executed that splendid memorial of his genius, the ceiling of the Advocates' Library. Among his papers, I found the following draft of a letter addressed to J. Clark, Esq., Advocate, which may be of some interest to the reader. It bears date 1822, and was evidently written before he commenced his task :—

“ TO J. CLARK, ESQ.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ Ever since I left you in September last, I have given my attention chiefly to the subjects for the Advocates' Library, and have been forwarding such studies as will facilitate my progress when I am with you. Not only the composition, but the effect, must be well considered, so that I may not have anything to undo, or be at a stand, when I should proceed. The “Muses,”—for them I have made small studies, with such accompaniments as will set them off; but the poets which must be introduced I have not determined upon, nor can I well do so without your advice. This, to me, is the soul of the business, and requires not a little consideration as to selection. When I had the pleasure of conversing with you, concerning the characters to be introduced, I understood it was your wish they should be very select, consequently very few: I fear not enough for my purpose. Might not their numbers be augmented by adding historians and philosophers, which Scotland can so amply furnish? As I have not had the opportunity which you have had of being acquainted with their merits, so far as to entitle them to a place of such pre-eminence, I will, therefore, request the assistance of your ideas on the subject, giving me the names, and the order in which they stand in merit. On this point it will be likely different opinions will arise to perplex our choice;

but this I refer to your good sense, when you shall have reflected on it sufficiently; for it is my purpose to abide by your direction, whichever way you determine, with the promise to state to you what I myself may think. This is a tribute I always feel as due when communicating opinions and ideas with another. Amongst my other dilemmas (with respect to disengaging myself from business here), I am thinking of the best means of reaching the dome of the library. The most simple that I can devise will be by a pair of steps, easily moved, and preferable to a scaffold. If such an article could be procured against my arrival, it would very much forward my proceedings when I begin with the work. My being a stranger must somewhat excuse the freedom of this application; so also must the friendly assurance of the good offices which I have received from you. I did expect to have left home ere this. My original purpose was to be in Edinburgh by the early part of April: that not taking place, has been occasioned chiefly by the publication of my etchings that I made from my designs of the 'Shield of Wellington,'—the presentation of which has been delayed so long, and before which time I could not with propriety publish them. This, and the coming exhibition, and some other matters of a like nature, were the cause; but in a few days I look to be free, to leave home, I think about the 10th or 11th."

I find among Stothard's papers the following, presented to the President and Council of the Advocates' Library:—

"Having now completed the painting of the 'cupola' in the library, and being very desirous of returning to London on

Wednesday, I should feel myself much obliged if you could make it convenient to order payment of the remuneration which it may be thought proper to allow me.

“ I undertook the work, understanding that you were willing to give three hundred guineas for it. I am sensible that, strictly speaking, I cannot claim more. But I humbly beg leave to state that I made a considerable sacrifice in leaving my business, and that the work has required double the time on which I calculated, although I have laboured incessantly, generally from six in morning till nine at night; and have really in two months done the work of four, exclusive of my former journey here to view the place and take my measurements,—and exclusive of the time which I spent in town preparing my design, to say nothing of the expense I have incurred in my journeys and living.

“ These circumstances I merely state for your and Mr. Clark’s consideration, assuring you at the same time that I shall be satisfied with the remuneration which you may think I deserve, be it whatever it may.

“ I have the honour to be, &c.”

Whilst in Edinburgh, Stothard kept a journal; but the entries he made were so brief, (merely stating where he went each day, with whom he dined, &c., without giving any particulars of interest), that I can find nothing to extract, except it be the dates in reference to his employment. He commenced painting the ceiling on Tuesday, the 4th of June, and finished it on Thursday, August the 1st, of the same year. Concerning the memorial, he states that it was presented, and that Mr. Thomson and Mr. Clark communicated to him that his request was granted, and that he

was to receive his remuneration on the following day ; but he does not say how much he received. There can be no doubt the payment was liberal.



*Pilgrim's Progress*, engraved 1769. The Diffidence, Mercy, through Diffidence, being left without at the gate, knocked aloud, and fainted: Goodwill immediately opened the gate, and raising her up, received her graciously.

I must not omit that in the year first named (1821) he sent to Somerset House the finest, and, I believe, the largest picture he had ever there exhibited,—The Vintage. His choice, as usual, was directed by having a frame that happened to fit the picture. It was one of the most beautiful he had ever placed before the public ; and, universally admired, was allowed by artists, and such as were capable of appreciating its excellence, to bear a marked resemblance to Rubens in richness and depth of colour,

whilst in drawing and grace it was not inferior to Titian. At the beginning of May, I was accompanied by his lamented son Charles (who did not live till the end of the month) to the private view of the Exhibition. Both Flaxman and Sir Thomas Lawrence then expressed their enthusiastic admiration of *The Vintage*. Lawrence, indeed, always showed the utmost deference to the opinions of Stothard; and Flaxman blended even affection with his respect for him.

Some time since, on naming my recollections of that memorable day to the elder Lewis (who is himself a clever artist in original composition, and generally engraved the finest chalk drawings of Lawrence); he told me so much did Sir Thomas admire and revere Stothard, that he always kept a cast of his bust, after Baily's beautiful head of him, upon the table of his studio.

Although Stothard, in 1825, attained the age of seventy years, his faculties continued unimpaired; and his imagination as vigorous as ever. At this period, he executed many most beautiful designs for the works of his friend, Mr. Rogers; and likewise an extensive series of illustrations of Shakespeare for Mr. Tegg, the bookseller. In 1825, he was also commissioned by Mr. Pickering to make a series of landscape drawings for a new edition of Walton's *Angler*. For this purpose, he repaired to Dovedale, Derbyshire; and wherefore that locality was chosen both by the publisher and the artist, a few words will explain.

Good old Izaak Walton, as he is familiarly called by his friends (and all his readers he makes such by the cheerful single-hearted spirit which pervades his most delightful volume), was on terms of intimacy with Charles Cotton, Esq., of Beresford in the Peak,

Derbyshire. This Mr. Cotton was, like himself, a great angler; and when Walton proposed to put forth a new edition of his Book



*Midsummer Night's Dream, Act IV., Scene 1. Published 1809.*

Go, "bid the huntsmen wake them with their horns."

on Fishing, he requested his friend "to oblige all lovers of the sport with a communication of his long practice and observation thereon; that the manner of exercising the art in the more northern rivers might be known." In consequence of this, Cotton also wrote a Book on Fishing; and his work and Walton's were printed together in 1676, "with the initial letters, engraved in the title-page of Mr. Cotton's part, of both their names, interwoven in a cipher, as it was carved over the door of the Fishing House on the swift and limpid river Dove."

To the Dove, therefore, Stothard repaired to make drawings,



not only of Beresford Hall, and the Fishing House in question, but of the beautiful scenery by which they were surrounded. He travelled in company with some friends, who, whilst he sketched, angled. During this pleasant excursion, Stothard kept a brief journal, from which I make, as a matter of curiosity, the following extracts.

After visiting Ashbourn, the party went to Ilam, whence he says, "We proceeded on the Staffordshire side of the river through Altonfield, and reached Beresford Hall at one o'clock; went about observing the interior; next drew the exterior; and afterwards went down to the beautiful scenery by the river Dove, called Pike Dale. On our way to the Fishing House, drew a front view; and at half-past nine left it for Hartington to refresh and sleep. . . .

"24th July. After an early breakfast we went down to Pike Dale; in the way stopped to draw a distant view of the Fishing House, and Pike Dale beyond it. Went to the river, and found W—— drawing the pike. I crossed the Dove by a foot-bridge, and drew the same view, but nearer on the Staffordshire side. After drawing for a little time, it began to rain, which compelled us both to run for shelter under a rock, affording convenient space and a seat for us. Here our patience was exercised for some hours, with very little intermission. When the rain ceased, P—— joined us, who had been confined for shelter in the Fishing House. About the same time a gentleman came over the bridge; he was a clergyman, and resided at Cotton's house, in apartments facing the garden in front, into which we went. . . . We were shown, by one of the daughters, a cave formed by a cleft in the rock; for which she had a lantern. Next we were shown the castle, near the

house. We were afterwards accommodated with tea and some toasted bacon, which P—— and W—— seemed much to relish. Took leave of the widow, the mistress of the house; she sent a little girl, her youngest daughter, to show us the way to Alfton-field, where we arrived by half-past eight, and went immediately to the church; and on returning I met W—— and P—— praising the ale they had drunk. Returned again to the church; heard an organ played within; found the west door not locked; desirous to view the interior, went in; saw Cotton's pew, much ornamented, in a corner by itself. . . .

“July 25th. After breakfast went and drew the church on the south-east side, leaning on the outside of the churchyard wall, under some trees, for shelter from threatened flying showers. We did not return to our inn, but proceeded across a field by a footpath, which soon became so precipitous as to retain the marks of alternate footsteps as steps, leading down into the hollow of Dove Dale. After descending I was so struck with the romantic appearance of cottages, with their accompaniments of little gardens, scattered on the sides of this steep declivity, contrasting with the wildness of the scenes, that I drew it, after crossing a bridge near a water-mill, which gives it the name of Mill Dale. Left this romantic little village in search of an elevation mentioned by Cotton, named Hanson Toot. On ascending and crossing some fields enclosed with walls of loose stones, we reached the top of the hill. A shower coming on, we ran towards an enclosed plantation of trees for shelter. From this place we had an extensive view. The winding course of the Dove not visible, but trenching the country with steep declivities, giving the view somewhat of a mountainous appearance. With respect to . . . [a word

imperfect] having no hedges, but in their place interfections with stone fences, with here and there a tree. P—— seeing a countryman or two walking on the path we had quitted for shelter, went and enquired for Hanson Toot; they told him he was on it, agreeably to our prior conjectures. I had by this time completed a sketch of this extensive scene; and, the rain ceasing, we made direct for the Dove, down the ravine of winding and steep descent. When two-thirds down, and before we could see the river below, we caught sight of Alstonfield Church, terminating and crowning our view up Dove Dale. In expectation of more interesting scenery, we descended; and at the bottom, and close by the Dove, on our left hand, two caves engaged our attention. One we entered, to avoid some sprinkling of rain. Attempted to draw the interior, but this requiring more time, desisted. Went down the river to Pickering's Tower; as I was drawing there, and opposite the Pike, at the bottom of which was a cave, was frequently obliged to fly into it for shelter from successive showers. Went down the river, exceedingly delighted with the succession of pyramidal rocks, projecting their spiral forms above the hanging woods—too many to enumerate. We at length reached Thorp Cloud; here I looked back to compare my former drawing. Proceeded towards Ashbourn; met the woman, P—— had commissioned to procure refreshments. Passed Thorp Cloud, and reached Ashbourn; and heard that Mr. White, who was expected by Mr. P—— was gone after us. He had traced us, but did not join us till supper."

On the morning of the 26th they proceeded to Bakewell. There he writes: "My three companions went fishing, and I went to the other side of the town, and ascended a field to take a view of the country, which appeared so delightfully beautiful. As we

approached the town of Bakewell, a shower coming on, I ran for shelter under a tree. Drew the church and steeple, which had been despoiled of its spire the preceding day." He next visited Haddon Hall and Chatsworth; but the notices he gives of those places are too brief for extract. At the inn, at night, he was shown a plate of fish—a dozen of trout and two graylings.

On the following day, July 27th, this entry appears: "Drew the roach and graylings." On the road to Hartington, the journal continues, "walked down towards Pike Dale. In our way stopped to draw the Fishing House, while my companions went forward to fish; when I had done, joined them at the little bridge. After crossing it, walked to the Fishing House, to correct my former drawing of it. I afterwards went round to the dwelling-house, and drew it as seen from the hill close behind it. Next returned to the river side. . . . On taking our leave of it (Beresford Hall) for the last time, we crossed the river on stepping-stones, purposing to go to Alstonfield without quitting the vale through which the river runs, under increasing steep declivities on each side of its winding course. After proceeding down by the Dove for two or three miles, we came to some stones, placed as steps to pass over; and, looking forward, we recognised a hill like Hanson Toot. On getting over the river, we ascended a very steep declivity. At the top a wall fence stopped us; by this we continued for some time; we crossed it, and got into a lane which led to Alstonfield." . . .

"28th July. After breakfast went through the churchyard, and down the hill to Mill Dale. Sketched it hastily; and crossing the bridge, I ascended the hill, while my companions kept by the river, engaged in fishing. As I ascended, I stopped to draw a view of

Mill Dale. Afterwards I reached the clump of trees on Hanfon Toot, whence I had made a hasty and imperfect sketch of the scene it commanded. I again drew it, and proceeded towards the ravine in the same direction. . . . After I had searched to no purpose for some one to inform me of my way, I met W——, who had ascended this ravine in search of me. We descended together, and stopped to take a view which looked towards Mill Dale, with Alstonfield; and descending still lower, we came to the two remarkable caverns. These I drew from the outside, affording greater opportunity for intelligent effect. Descending down the Dove, drew Pickering Tower. On reaching it, made a drawing of the ravine below it. Beyond was W—— standing; he was my companion, drawing with me the same views, whilst P—— and White were proceeding before us, as we descended with the river, the romantic and beautiful scenery attracting our attention. We reached the rock called the Church, which we drew. Below this the ravine suddenly turned eastward, and finished with Thorp Cloud. Our fishing companions were not yet tired of their sport, although unsuccessful. I proceeded between Thorp Cloud and the river for Ilam, following a path leading through enclosed meadows, which led me again to the river, where I crossed a bridge, and at a convenient distance I drew it. While so doing, my company overtook me, and again proceeded to Ilam. I soon followed, and took a nearer view of the house; and to find my companions, I passed through the village; and with some difficulty got a nearer view of the same side of the building. While I was sketching the peculiarity of the architecture, W—— joined me. We both remarked that our approach to the dwelling had excited the attention of the inmates. I therefore left off drawing. We

turned to the village, and entered a house where P—— and W—— were taking some refreshment. I left them, and returned to the place I had first chosen for my view, with a proposal that they would return home that way, and I should join them. Soon after, Mr. White came alone, and told me that they had been directed a nearer way. At the same time I saw them in the meadow beneath, beyond the river. We immediately set off towards Ilam, went over the stream by stepping-stones; but P—— and W—— had proceeded and gone onward. We followed a path till we reached the Dove; another path misled us up a steep hill, which White was for taking. In compliance with his idea, I ascended. On getting to the top, the path disappeared. Again deceived, we resumed our former course into the next field. On the other side was a bridge, with several low arches. My companion was not for crossing the river. Against my advice, he inquired of some people, who directed him to cross the bridge. Again W—— inquired of a woman with some children. It turned out to be the same woman that we had employed on the preceding Sunday to go from Dove Dale, and fetch refreshments from Ashbourn. By her direction we got into the old road leading to Ashbourn, and found, as we expected, P—— and W—— at our inn, and arrived a full half-hour before us; and, moreover, they had waited for us on the road another half-hour. Refreshment was acceptable; afterwards to rest."

I am fully aware that there is much in this journal which will be considered trifling. But I have given it because I think a certain degree of interest attaches itself to the everyday life of a man of transcendent genius like Stothard. We

with to see if he good-naturedly unbent with his associates and friends; and if he shared kindly and in common with them, the little incidents of pleasure or of difficulty, attendant on travel and change.

His Derbyshire sketches, I have no doubt, were true and beautiful; for in landscape Stothard was admirable; his backgrounds of that nature are generally distinguished by richness of colour, and warm glowing sunsets; they display execution in pencilling, but are seldom highly finished. Indeed, very few of his pictures are so; yet that he could finish highly and elaborately when leisure or inclination led him on to the task, witness his beautiful little picture of *The Cock and the Fox*, from Chaucer: and several of his landscape drawings from nature are equal to those of any artist who has exclusively devoted his study to scenes of this description. We have an instance of this also in his two most exquisite drawings of Clifton and Chepstow, that, among the vast collection of a portion of his works, were sold at Christie's, in June, 1834, soon after his death.

His last great designs were for the frieze, and other parts of the interior of the new palace, St. James's Park. The subjects are illustrative of the History of England. They principally relate to the wars of the White and Red Roses. The venerable artist was between seventy and eighty years old when he executed these works, which possess all the spirit and vigour of imagination that distinguished his best days. As a whole, there is not, perhaps, to be found a more interesting series of historical designs of any country in ancient or modern times. Well might George the Fourth say, as he did, on seeing the Cupids in birds' nests, which were designed for one portion of the frieze (of course not connected



with the historical subjects), "that although Stothard had far advanced in years, he had lost none of his sprightliness." It is to be wished that the drawings made for the palace, as they were *for a public work, and at the public cost*, should be deposited, with the fine collection of prints, after Stothard, now forming, at *the British Museum*, more especially as the death of George the Fourth put an end to the decorations of the palace, before they were completed;



The Marriage of Henry the Seventh. Design for one of the friezes for the great staircase at Buckingham Palace.

From the drawing in the possession of S. Rogers, Esq.

so that some of Stothard's designs have yet been unemployed. William the Fourth, from a principle of economy (much to be regretted where the Fine Arts were concerned), cut short the work; saying, that the apartments were good enough as they were.\*

Among Stothard's papers have been found the following, in connection with these designs for the palace. The first is addressed to him from the architect:—

\* Stothard fortunately made duplicate copies of his designs for the new palace. These, after his death, were bought at Christie's sale by Mr. Rogers. The original drawings were deposited at the Board of Works, now united with the Woods and Forests. May they speedily be removed from their obscurity to the British Museum, where young artists may benefit by seeing them.

“MY DEAR SIR,

“I have agreed with Baily to do the four bas-reliefs for the throne-room, and have referred him to you to furnish the designs, &c., &c.

“Ever yours,

“JOHN NASH.”

“Wednesday afternoon.”

The rough draft of the next is in Stothard's handwriting ; but there is no name to whom it was addressed. From the contents, there can be little doubt it was to Mr. Nash :—

“DEAR SIR,

“I have sent you an explanation of the four subjects of the friezes for the great staircase ;\* you will see they are historical, and I have endeavoured by choice of incident to render them characteristic of the time, and as poetic as my powers would admit, agreeing with the appellation of the war of *the White and Red Roses* of York and Lancaster.

“The first is an epitome of the many battles in the course of thirty years, which desolated this kingdom. In this I have personified Discord ; she occupies the centre of the group. Beneath her are those who have fallen in battle—a son recognising, as an enemy, his dying father ; and a dying son lamented by the father. This I have taken from Shakespeare ; too strong and forcible an image of the time to be omitted. This forms the centre. On

\* Mr. Stothard made designs for the great staircase and the south drawing-room, as well as for the throne-room.

each side are the archers, discharging their arrows from the long bow, the weapon most prevalent in this country, from the period of the Conquest by William of Normandy.

“The next subject in chronological order is what took place at Tewkesbury after the battle, by the unfeeling Edward striking with his gauntlet the face of the son of Henry the Sixth, his prisoner,—a signal for assassination to Gloucester and his brother, Clarence,



Apollo and the Muses. A design for sculpture to adorn the south drawing-room of Buckingham Palace.

From the drawing in the possession of S. Rogers, Esq.

with others of their party. At the same time his mother, Queen Margaret, is led away to the Tower of London. This forms the centre of the composition. On each hand are the victors, dismounted, and resting after the battle.

“The two other subjects are of greater length by almost a third. The first of these is The crowning the victorious Henry, Earl of Richmond, at the battle of Bosworth Field; and to exemplify the atrocity of Richard, I have introduced his False Accusation of Hastings on the one side, and the Death of the two Young Princes in the Tower on the other.

“To contrast with these preceding tragical subjects, I have in the centre represented the Marriage of Henry the Seventh, with the Daughter of Edward the Fourth, the Union of the White and Red

Roses; and on one hand, as an image of peace and happiness, I have introduced young men and women dancing, and on the other side is represented a family in peace and security, a father instructing his sons, and a mother her daughters, in various occupations, which finishes this series."

For the south drawing-room, Stothard designed Apollo and the Muses, the Poets assembled on Parnassus, and Flowers interspersed with Boys. These designs were intended also for sculpture. The following note (no doubt addressed to Mr. Nash) refers to them:—

"DEAR SIR,

"On my visit to you yesterday, to put into your hands the drawings which met your approval (conscious of your late illness) I forbore to solicit you in behalf of my son Alfred, who performed the part of modeller of the Four Seasons, which I flatter myself was to your satisfaction. My wish now is, that he should be employed to model these my designs for the south drawing-room. If this, my request, receives your assent, I will, on my part, afford the like personal assistance as I did in modelling the Seasons. The interest I feel as a father, will, I hope, my dear sir, be of sufficient excuse for my thus troubling you with this solicitation.

"Believe me, with the greatest respect,

"Your obedient Servant,

"T. STOTHARD." \*

\* From various scattered memoranda in Stothard's handwriting, I collect that the sums he received for the designs he made for the new palace were as follows:—

It may not be generally known that Stothard made designs for some of the most celebrated pieces of our sculpture. Amongst



From Chantrey's Sleeping Children, Lichfield Cathedral.

these may be mentioned the monument of Garrick, in Westminster

|  |      |    |    |
|--|------|----|----|
| For four designs of Cupids, &c.  | £    | s. | d. |
| For the Four Seasons . . .   | 63   | 0  | 0  |
| For four designs for the throne-room: the subject, the Wars of the White and Red Roses | 147  | 0  | 0  |
|  | £294 | 0  | 0  |

These designs completed the 30th of April, 1829.

In a note he adds, "But for the south drawing-room, for which I made three designs, and sent to Mr. Nash, I heard no more of them, in consequence of the suspen-

sion." In another paper his estimate for them thus appears:—

TO THE BOARD OF WORKS.—THE NEW PALACE ACCOUNT.

For the south drawing-room. Delivered into the hands of Mr. Nash the following designs, in 1830:

|   |    |    |    |
|---|----|----|----|
| Apollo and the Muses . . .                  | £  | s. | d. |
| Ditto of the Poets . . .                    | 31 | 10 | 0  |
| Ditto Boys, &c. . . . .                     | 15 | 15 | 0  |
| Three designs of Boys and Foliage . . . . . | 63 | 0  | 0  |

£141 15 0

Abbey ; also that for Chantrey's exquisite figures of The Sleeping Children, in Lichfield Cathedral ; and the monument for the late Miss Johnes, of Hafod, erected to her memory in Wales. Stothard



*Sleeping Children in Lichfield Cathedral, from a Sketch by Stothard.*

said that no sculptor had ever before so completely embodied his ideas in the marble ; and he always spoke of Chantrey as a man of a high order of genius, cultivated and imbued with the grace of classic antiquity.\*

\* Sir F. Chantrey, on being questioned on the subject of the Lichfield monument, by Mr. Hawkins, of the British Museum, assured him that the original idea for it was given to him by their mother, Mrs. Robinson, in conversation, "dwelling upon her feelings, when, before she retired to bed, she had usually contemplated them, as she hung over them, locked in each other's

arms asleep." It occurred to Chantrey that the representation of this scene would be the most appropriate monument, and he soon after made the suggestion to Stothard. The design is not unlike that of Northcote's picture of *The Murder of the Princes in the Tower*, engraved in Boydell's *Shakespeare*, many years before.

## CHAPTER XI.

Stothard's studies of animals—Remarks of the would-be critics on his works—Anecdote of an amateur—Vast number of his compositions—His comic power—Compared with Hogarth—Diversity of his genius—General remarks on the character of his drawings and his oil paintings—His pictures of Beckett, and the Sleeping Diana—The Italian and English schools contrasted.

THERE WAS no branch of Art, but at some period or other, Stothard had attempted it, and always with success; and few things in Nature were considered below the attention of his most observant mind. If he wanted to make himself acquainted with any natural object, he always drew it. If any of his children asked him a question relating to a bird, or an animal, he instantly took up the pencil and sketched it, by way of illustrating the explanation he gave in reply. And as to himself in order more fully to understand what might be required if he had occasion to introduce an animal in a picture, he would often draw even the skeleton of it. One, of the entire elephant, where every bone is most carefully distinguished, is still in the possession of his son Alfred; it is in pen and ink. Several of his fine studies from living creatures, such as the lion, the tiger, the leopard, &c., are to be found in the collections of the admirers of his works. In sketching animals, he was as remarkable for observing the grace of form and action, as in drawing the human figure. As an instance of the exquisite taste and masterly style in which he both drew and grouped quadrupeds, I would refer to a



small print (for I have never seen the original) of Orpheus charming the beasts with his lyre. The lion approaching and bending his head, as he listens with delight to "the sweet harmony," possesses an expression at once original and beautiful. The birds, also, in that picture, from the stately ostrich to the smallest on the bough, are exquisitely portrayed.

Nor did this great painter disdain to copy others, when any useful object was to be gained by so doing. The last day I was at his house, he showed me a collection of sketches copied from a work on Eastern habits and costume; observing that they would be useful to him in his designs for Eastern subjects. He also made vast collections of prints of foreign cities and countries; fancying, as he said, that he *travelled* when he looked at them: and they were hints for correctness in his different works. Many years ago, he commenced carving with a penknife a set of ivory chess-men after his own designs. Of these he executed only two or three pieces. One represented the knight, that warlike character of the game, attired in armour, with a lance in his hand, ready for the field. The pawns, I believe, he intended to be archers; and the king and queen were to be royal personages, attired in the costume of the middle ages. The pieces he finished were very beautiful.\*

\* I recollect having seen, years ago, at Ghent, some *carvings in ivory* by Michael Angelo, that in their style of execution very much resembled those of Stothard. Michael Angelo's work was, however, finished. It was a little portable altar, known in Roman Catholic countries by the name of a *Tabernacle*, intended to hold the pix. Stothard's knight for chess was not unlike some of the faints which in miniature

dimensions decorated the sides of this beautiful little box by Michael Angelo; for it was shaped exactly like a box, only that it opened with folding-doors in front, instead of having a lid. The whole was in ivory. It is grievous to add, that Stothard's exquisite ivory carvings were stolen from the rooms of Messrs. Christie and Manson, when the works of the painter were on view before the sale.

In his method of study, Stothard deeply considered his subject before he took it in hand; and whilst engaged upon it, was not easily satisfied. He would frequently alter, re-touch, lay the picture aside, or keep it on the easel, during the time he was employed on something else, the better to consider the general effect; so that if anything struck him, he might improve it. Even this did not always satisfy him; and when a picture came home from the Exhibition, he would often touch it again.

Nor did he disdain the opinions of others, when they were judicious. I have seen many fragments of his letters, in which he says, that he is endeavouring to alter, or to do something to a work in hand, in accordance with the remarks he had received from his friends, or from the individual for whom he was painting it. Now and then, such were made by certain would-be critics, whose presumption was more apparent than their judgment in venturing to censure the works of such a man. I have more than once been not a little amused by finding in some of the letters addressed to him, criticisms and pieces of advice of this description: one tells him that his angels are too substantial; another finds fault with a blue apron; a third requires more freedom and less stiffness in the drapery; and somebody else wants more finish; whilst a lady insisted on her husband returning upon the artist's hands, one of the very finest of his works (his favourite also), because the Diana which formed the subject of it, was painted without petticoats.\* All this Stothard bore with a most meek and patient spirit.

\* The Bower of Diana, Stothard himself said, was painted in "*the Venetian manner*," and that the sketch he made, before he executed the picture, was done in the same

way. He remarked, that it had stood the test of ten or twelve years, and had improved by it. "For my part," (he says, in the fragment of a letter to Mr. Benson,)

He had very little opinion of works on painting written by persons who were wholly unacquainted with the practical part of the art on which they commented. True it is, that he did not think it necessary every one who wrote on such subjects should be a first-rate artist; but so deeply was he convinced the study of the practical part was necessary to the writer, as it not only cultivated the taste, but opened the eyes, and formed the judgment for works of the highest order of merit, that he did not think any one should venture to write on painting unless, to a certain extent, he could handle the pencil. The following anecdote will illustrate his feeling on the subject:—

He was invited out to dine with a friend, in order to meet a great amateur and collector of pictures. At dinner, the amateur talked so critically, learnedly, and fluently upon painting and painters, that Stothard fancied he was seated by so great a critic in ancient and modern Art, that he should never be able to compete with him: he therefore said little or nothing. Presently, however, the great painter found that the critic upon Art, when a fine picture was put before him, was not only ignorant of its real merits; but was so wanting in taste and discrimination that he did not make a single remark applicable to the subject, or which evinced either knowledge or judgment.

So numerous were the compositions of Stothard, that they consist of more than TEN THOUSAND DESIGNS. I should think it

"I think there is a crispness, a freshness about it, totally opposite to what we generally see in modern pictures, which appear, frequently, of a putty texture: the texture of this my eye can dwell on for ever without satiety. But I am now talking like a

painter to a painter, and perhaps impertinently; if so, you must forgive this prating." The Bower of Diana was painted on a red ground, laid on the canvas; the lights of the picture were first painted, and then glazed over with colour.

impossible that any one could give a regular list of them, as the artist could not do so himself. His whole life of labour, study, and industry, had been devoted to one object; and, by constant practice, he had gained a facility of execution which, in his early years, he could not have anticipated. Some of his earlier works



are now so rare, that they are absolutely not to be bought (I speak of the engravings from them), and of many, the plates were worn out by the frequency of the impressions.

There can be no doubt that Stothard's youthful study of Raphael helped, not merely to form his taste, but to develop his own remarkable powers, and to make him what he was. He had imbibed that grace or *mystery of painting*, which is so transcendently beautiful in the pictures of the Italian masters. This they owed to the Church, the principal patron, in the greatest age of Art, of architecture, sculpture, painting, and all the Fine Arts. The result of this patronage may be seen in the exquisite purity, in the expression of angelic sweetness, which altogether rendered the works of the old masters, of Raphael in particular, of something more than earthly character; and the great difference between the English and the Italian school of historical painting, is more

marked, perhaps, in this than in any other feature. The Holy Families of English painters are human beings; with the Italians they are only human forms; having, however, diffused into them something of a superhuman spirit. In the latter school, there is also a warmth and a depth of colour which the English too frequently



The Fable of Narcissus, from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Book III, Engraved 1807.

neglect. Indeed that pure taste which pervades all the efforts of Italian Art, extends itself even to subjects that are of classic mythology, nay to those of an Ovidian character; for, whilst our British Venuses are but Venuses, and have in them more of beauty than of delicacy, the Italian artists, educated as painters for the Church, possessed that refinement of feeling which enabled them to blend two most opposite things into a perfect harmony with each other; for they alone knew how to give to voluptuousness itself an air of

modesty ; so that it might be called, by a catachresis, *the seduction of virtue*.

Stothard was a great master in this refinement of feeling ; all his females are modest, and nothing can be more airy or sylph-like than his girls, or more fascinating than his women. He seems to delight in the lovely and the graceful, more than in the commanding and the dignified. He gives us a hundred Juliets and Rosalinds to one Constance or Lady Macbeth ; and, in depicting such characters as the last-named, so pervading is his love for all that is feminine in woman, that he scarcely bestows on such beings that energy, bordering on what is masculine in its development, which the poet requires ; for we cannot fancy either a Volumnia or a Lady Macbeth, even in their physical distinctions, to resemble the ordinary race of women, whose chief excellence is, as Coleridge has so well remarked, to be “characterless,” having no strong passions or propensities to lead them into resolute or independent action ; their principal moral excellence being that docility of mind which yields to the guidance of another, and holds to the support of man, as the clinging ivy does to the column which it most adorns with beauty at the very moment it receives its sustaining strength. Stothard’s powers were peculiarly adapted to enable him to become a chivalrous painter of the fair sex. His sportiveness, —his elegance,—his taste,—his flight yet masterly pencilling, so delicate in little indications, fine and feeling as the gentle heart,—rendered him the very chronicler of youth, and beauty, whose evanescent charms he had the spell to fix and to record in all their festal glory.

The only prominent fault in Stothard was now and then seen in *mannerism* ; and this was more especially observed in

a certain indescribable cast of countenance, which he depicted too often in his females. Certainly it was a beautiful peculiarity; but, from repetition, it became *mannerism*, and many of his female heads, with their large eyes and peculiar expression, are as impossible to be mistaken for individual character, as the cat's head form and features of Sir Joshua Reynolds, who unquestionably beautified and rendered human the feline countenance, in nine out of ten, in the faces of his children.

The sunshine brightness and warmth of Stothard's mind gave the poetic stamp to all his compositions. He never could be vulgar. Rich as he was in humour, yet it was humour of the most refined sort,—that which is allied to wit of character or simplicity of heart. The first is seen in his Falstaffs; the second in his Sanchos. He never could be *Dutch*; he never could have painted what was termed a *Dutch Drollery*, in which the humour of the piece is principally produced by low-life fun, and unseemly incident; he never could paint man when man degenerates into the brute, as Hogarth did, with a fidelity that borders on disgust, in his *Modern Midnight Conversation*. Hogarth not only made us loathe, but sicken at the very sight of vice. Stothard never brought any vicious images before us; he led us through the fairy ground of the picturesque and the beautiful. Hogarth showed us where lay the bog and the quagmire, that we might not be lost or foiled in our road. Both, therefore, may be considered as *moral* painters; each as teachers in a school of ethics, though of a different class.

Stothard's pictures of humble (not low) life were very characteristic,—his landlords and publicans,—his Christopher Slys, Tam



O'Shanters,—and his Companions, are all rich in humour: but they do not represent base fellows that would shock a gentlewoman: she may smile, but will not blush. His gipsies, perhaps, are often too like ladies masquerading as gipsies; they are not the real fortune-tellers,—a compound of cunning and petty larceny: but he was, as a painter, aristocratic; he could condescend gracefully to humble or rural life; but he could never descend to low life. His acquaintance with the actual world around him was comparatively small; and the principal use he made of it was, to assist in developing and giving form to the conceptions of his own mind.

Perhaps Stothard did not sufficiently attend to the world in which he moved;—of its little-ness, in little and ordinary things, he had small comprehension,—of knavery, trick, and manœuvre, he had not the slightest observation. Fortunate was it for him that his pursuits generally led him to have dealings but with honourable men and respectable publishers; else would he have become an easy prey, for he took every man's honesty by the measure of his own assertions. A child was not more guileless than he was, or more thoroughly unacquainted with the selfishness practised by half mankind. He had a world of honour, worth, and beauty, within himself, and in that he lived and moved.



Widow Wadman inviting Toby to take the mote out of her eye.

From the *Novelist's Magazine*, published 1781.

I am persuaded that his very fault of mannerism, in some of his paintings, proceeded from this habit of contemplating beauty in the sun-lit region of his own mind, without sufficiently attending to the actual world about him. Hence was it, that whatever he touched he made it his own; and, sometimes, with Stothard's grace, it had Stothard's faults.

His genius was unlimited; it embraced every species of composition,—every subject of the pencil,—landscape, portrait, cities, architecture, sea-pieces, animals, birds, flowers, fruits, costume, even insects,—all were familiar to the great historical painter, who could make even sacred subjects, as well as our own Shakespeare, become more familiar to the mind,—who could rise with the sublimity of the Bible in the portraiture of prophets, saints, and angels,—who could embody the majesty of princes and the heroism of warlike chiefs,—who could give to love its tender sportiveness and its purple wing,—to beauty, its crown and flowers,—to childhood, its sweetness, and its smiles, and tears,—and could call up scenes of social, domestic, and rural life, with a pathos and a truth that made their way to the heart.

The drawings of this great master have long been considered, both by artists and collectors, as unique in their kind. The finest and largest collection that I have ever seen is in the possession of Stothard's friend, Rogers, the poet. Not very long ago, I was gratified by viewing them at his house, in St. James's Place, the seat, indeed, of the Muses, of genius, classic elegance, and taste. To look on the drawings of Stothard, and to hear them commented on by the venerable author of the *Pleasures of Memory*, is something worth remembering, among the most pleasing events of social life. To the honour of Rogers be it spoken, he ever

appreciated, encouraged, and liberally rewarded, the efforts of Stothard's pencil. He was at once his patron and his affectionate and familiar friend; and to this day that amiable poet entertains his admiration of Stothard, with an enthusiasm that is unchilled by time and unabated by habit. Rogers is one of those rare souls who are always young; with whom time and even decay do but injure the casket, but cannot touch the jewel that it holds within.

Having already spoken at large respecting Stothard's drawings, I have only to add a few observations on his pictures in oil. These were so various (and in many he is wholly free from the fault of mannerism), that it is impossible to do full justice to his powers, by the sight of merely *one picture*. Some of them, however beautifully composed, were slight, hasty, and, in parts, not sufficiently defined. Others, on the contrary (especially those painted on a *red ground*, like most by the old Venetian masters), were marked by a depth and strength of colour, that fully equalled Rubens, and gave to several, especially those on panel, an air of antiquity. Of this kind I will instance two only:—The first, a little picture of *The Death of Thomas à Beckett*. It breathed the very spirit of the old masters,—it was rich, even to excess, in colour; and looked at least three centuries old. Another, *The Sleeping Diana*, possesses in the repose of the figure, indescribable beauty. It is not one of those sleeping figures that appear like statues laid at full length,—it is a creature of flesh and blood, in a calm and breathing rest. The colour, too, is fine; and the deep blues in the background, with the ruddy and glowing effects of an evening sun, forcibly remind one of Titian.

Those deep blues which Londoners think unnatural in pictures, are common in Italian climates; and not less common in the

mountainous districts of Switzerland, England, and Scotland: in level countries they are never seen. But Stothard had visited the Lakes, North Wales, and Scotland; and nothing, in those lands, where Nature is a poet, struck him so much as the wondrous and almost magical effects of the deep aerial blues. He said they would change in an instant the whole face of the country, making it a new creation. He revelled amid such effects in his own pictures. His Choice of Paris, and his Triumph of Thetis (which I have the satisfaction to say are at this moment before my eyes), are not less excellent in these peculiarities of richness and of depth, though they are less finished than many of his other works.

Greatly as Stothard admired good drawing, and beautifully as he drew, yet sometimes he was himself careless in this respect; the neglect too frequently arose from his not having time to finish highly, nor to devote so much of it as he could wish to the more minute parts of his outline. He used, with regret, to compare the condition of an English historical painter, with one of the old Italian school. The latter, were he really skilled in painting, was certain to have ample time and opportunity afforded him to execute a great picture. Whilst it was in progress, he was supported either by his prince, or by one of the nobility, who would take him into his palace, give him spacious apartments, and cause him to be treated with all honour. He had not one *worldly* care to distract him, or to take off his attention from his work, or to compel him to hasten over it, or to bestow on it one hour less than he desired. But the English painter, left solely to his own unassisted and precarious exertions, is often obliged to hasten through one subject to secure employment upon another for bread, and lives by the *number* of the works he executes, instead of by their individual

excellence, as works of Art. Can we then wonder that a Stothard has exceeded in *number* the productions of a Raphael, and yet leaves no single picture which in the excellencies that are the result of time, labour, deep study, magnitude, and finish, can compete with his?

There is another thing, also, in which the Italian school had the advantage over the English. It is here noticed, with no intention to wound the feelings of any living individual, but simply because it is truth. Young artists of the present day are, for the greater part, young men of poor circumstances and station. They begin to study for painters with an *uneducated mind*. Only genius of the very noblest order can hope to overcome such a defect as this. In Italy, many of the greatest painters were learned or highly educated men; and so necessary for an artist did Michael Angelo deem a liberal education, that he said, "No one but a gentleman should study to become a painter." This is too exclusive; but it shows the opinion of that great man, and that he thought the pursuits of the scholar, and the advantages of good society, were likely to enable the student to achieve far greater things in Art, than can be hoped for by the painter who has no previous stores of his own to assist him in forming his taste and refining his feelings; and who is ignorant of that grace so necessary in poetic composition, which is best gained and preserved by associating with the educated and the polite, either in the domestic or the social circle.

## CHAPTER XII.

Stothard's family—His eldest son, Thomas—His melancholy fate—His second son, Charles—His talents—Worth—And death—His children, Henry, Alfred, Robert, and Emma—The kindness of Stothard to young students and friends—Respect paid to him by his brother Academicians—Death of his friend Flaxman—And his wife—His sorrow for her loss—His health fails—Last attempt to handle the pencil—His death and burial—His character as a man, and genius as a painter—Sale of his works after his death.

I HAVE said so much about Stothard and his works, that I have now but to close these slight and miscellaneous reminiscences with the mention of a few circumstances of a most painfully interesting nature respecting his family, and a few anecdotes that relate to himself more as a man than as a painter.

The eldest son, who bore his father's name, and inherited a large portion of his genius, was, by all accounts, a gifted, noble, and spirited lad; one of those boys of whom we naturally augur great things. His historical designs and drawings seemed to come without effort. For so young a person, his father considered them very extraordinary. They were mostly battle pieces, or relating to war; and so decided was the turn of his mind, that he said he should never be happy unless he might be suffered to go into the army, for he longed to tread the paths of military honour. All his childish play, even from his infancy, had been about soldiers and battles; and when he heard of any gallant action, his counte-

nance would light up and glow at the relation—and the youth who felt thus, and who could so give graphic life to his feelings, had not attained his thirteenth year! He was, I have heard his father say, of a fine person, of a frank and manly countenance, good-natured in the extreme, but of a fiery spirit—ever in action, and yet full of thought. Alas! he was cut off, not by the common casualties of disease, that sometimes wither youth in the blossom, but by a death as violent as it was sudden, and by the very means so destructive in modern war—he was accidentally shot dead on the spot!

His afflicted mother, who never recovered the shock of his death, used to relate some circumstances respecting this disastrous event, that must not be omitted; and to these Mr. Alfred Stothard has recently added other particulars of no ordinary kind. I begin, therefore, with a remarkable incident, which the latter assured me occurred not very long before his poor brother Thomas died.

One night, some weeks previous to that melancholy event, Thomas retired, at his usual hour, early to rest. He slept in an attic of the house in Newman Street. How long he had been in bed, I do not know; but both his parents, and one or two of the servants, were suddenly and greatly alarmed by hearing the most violent shrieks proceeding from Thomas's room. Mr. and Mrs. Stothard—indeed, all in the house who heard them—rushed to his apartment, when they found the poor boy sitting up in bed, pale as death, and in an agony of fear. His father, his mother, both inquired what was the matter, and if anything had happened to him.

As soon as he could speak, he told them, with a mingled expression of fear and awe, that something had indeed happened to



him; he had seen a vision, full of terror, in his sleep. A man, habited as a watchman, had appeared to him, holding in his hand a white flag, on the corner of which was a small spot of blood. The man then waved the flag over his head, until, as he kept waving it to and fro, the small spot spread itself out, and so increased that the whole of the white flag at length became covered with blood. He felt great terror, and, calling out for help, awoke. This dream made the deepest impression on the boy. He, in some measure, recorded it, by the next day writing, with his own hand, *in red chalk*, on the whitewashed wall, by the side of his bed, "And your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams." From that time the little room which he had so marked, was called in the family, "the dreaming room;" and Mr. Alfred Stothard tells me, that so long as his father lived, the writing on the wall was never suffered to be effaced. The boy, I believe, said little more about his dream, but most likely he looked upon it as premonitory; since, from that night of terror, to the day of his death (about three months after), no circumstance could for a moment induce him to forego the most constant and earnest attendance at Tottenham Court Chapel, in the neighbourhood. All this in a boy, not thirteen years old, was so extraordinary, that insensible indeed to all impressions, all convictions, connected with the great mysteries and mercies of the Almighty, must that mind be which does not see in it a manifest act of Divine Providence, to warn, indeed, not merely the poor boy, so soon snatched off, but the unthinking, the careless, and the sceptical.

But there was a more awful, a yet more mysterious circumstance, connected with the boy's death, which the afflicted mother used to

relate, and to which Alfred Stothard, on reading my first account of it, added some few particulars previously unknown to me, as he had derived them from his parents. I do not pretend to judge of it. It might have been the effect of a *deceptio visus*, produced by a strong and anxious imagination; or it might have been a warning more than natural. It is not, however, my place to decide what it was, but simply to relate those particulars which so deeply impressed the mind of one, whose veracity was never questioned in the relation of them.

On the day the fatal accident occurred, the boy, in a very lively mood, came to his father, and asked him to give him some money, with permission to go out and buy a bird. His request was granted, and he left the house. As it afterwards appeared, in his way to make the purchase, he called on a favourite schoolfellow, to ask him to go with him.

Mr. and Mrs. Stothard that afternoon proposed, what they often did in the summer months, to take a walk together in the neighbourhood, or in one of the parks. They went, therefore, to their sleeping-room to make some change of dress. Mrs. Stothard had desired a servant to air a gown, and to bring it up to her room. The servant had neglected this last part of the order. Mr. Stothard was standing before a glass, with his back towards Mrs. Stothard, when she suddenly exclaimed (as if addressing her son), "Tom, what do you do here? But as you are here, go down and tell the servant to bring up my gown."

Mr. Stothard, knowing that his son was out by his permission, said, with extreme surprise, "What do you mean? Tom cannot be here; he is gone out to buy a bird."

"I saw him but this instant, standing by the side of the bed yonder," replied Mrs. Stothard; and a cold chill ran through her husband's veins, as she added, that when she spoke to him, he moved strangely, seemed to stoop down, and she saw him no more. She was greatly agitated, yet retained a perfect possession of her senses; but almost began to doubt their evidence, when she heard a knock at the house-door. On eagerly inquiring who it might be; the servant told her that two strangers were below, asking for Mr. Stothard. She rushed down the stairs, and wanted to know their business. They would tell her nothing, but persisted in their desire to see her husband. He at length appeared. They requested to speak with him alone. "It is about Tom," said Mrs. Stothard, in the greatest perturbation of mind. Mr. Stothard and the gentlemen went into a front parlour. The door was shut. The anxious mother could not restrain the feelings of agonised curiosity that possessed her; she listened at the door, and heard that her son Thomas was shot dead by a schoolfellow, who was accidentally handling a gun, and who, not knowing it to be loaded, aimed it at the unhappy boy, when they were about going out together.

Deeply as Stothard felt this sudden stroke of calamity, he nevertheless supported it in a manner that was suited to the philosophical character of his mind. He felt deeply indeed, but he bore his feelings silently; not thinking it proper to disturb others with his sorrows: for he was not, he thought, of sufficient consequence to complain that he was not spared his share of those accidents and trials, allotted to so many who he considered were more worthy than himself.

Of his second most gifted and amiable son, Charles, the fate was

no less calamitous, no less sudden; for he also perished by an accident, being killed on the spot by a fall from a ladder whilst engaged in his professional pursuits—making a drawing of the founder from some ancient stained glass, in the east window of the church of Beer Ferrers, Devon. But the circumstances attending



*Pilgrim's Progress. Christian and Hopeful at the River.*

his death are already so well known, and have been so fully detailed in the Memoirs of his life, which were written by myself, and published many years ago, that it is not necessary here again to enter at large on the distressing particulars. To his father, to myself (but one month before the birth of a dear and only child), and to all his family and connections, the shock was truly great.

Never can I forget the evening, when the venerable father came to the house of my parents, with whom I was residing, to communicate the dreadful news, which he had received only an hour or two before. It had been broken to him by Mr. Jackson, the portrait-painter, upon whom Mr. Rivington, the publisher, had waited with the letter that conveyed the intelligence to London. Mr. Naylor, an old and worthy friend of Stothard, came with him—he needed support at such a moment. Such a scene of sorrow as was then witnessed by that friend, may be conceived, but cannot be described in all its bitterness. Those only who have experienced the horror, the blight that the sudden death of one beloved casts on the soul of the survivor, can form any adequate idea of the suffering.

Stothard was pale and agitated; he sat down and burst into tears—and said something in a low, broken voice apart to my mother; but I did not hear more than that his son Charles was ill. In that brief space, my dear mother, quick of ear and of feeling, where her child's life and happiness were concerned, had heard all, and implored the bereaved father, not suddenly to burst on me the knowledge, that he was so bereaved,—that I was so bereaved. The full extent of the calamity was, therefore, for some hours concealed from me. I knew only that an accident by a fall from a height had happened, that it was of a most alarming kind; but I knew not that death had destroyed all hope in this world.

Even in those trying moments, and in the midst of his own sorrows, the father of my lost and beloved husband, endeavoured to control his own feelings, that he might not aggravate my sufferings by the sight of his. He took an almost speechless leave of us.

Some hours after, my own lamented brother (the late Alfred Kempe) came to me; a friend having gone to him without a moment's delay, to bring him up from Bromley, in Kent, as soon as the fatal news was known. After this most distressing interview with his sister, he hastened to see Stothard before he left town to attend the funeral of his dear son. It was past midnight when he reached Newman Street.

I remember once hearing my brother say, when reverting to the tragical incidents of that night, he was never more surprised than by that meeting. For whilst, at some moments the aged and afflicted father seemed overwhelmed by the suddenness of the shock, and the greatness of the loss; yet even then, he endeavoured to control his feelings, in order that he might attend to what he supposed to be the wants of a friend, who had come up directly from Kent, to sympathise with him; and if it were possible, at such a time, to afford him the consolations of friendship. My brother added, that he had never before been so struck with the greatness of Stothard's character: so much deep feeling, yet so much self-command. His words were—"He was kind, even polite in the midst of the bitterest sufferings; I never saw such a man; it is impossible to do other than reverence him."

The unhappy father left town the next day for Beer Ferrers, in order to have the melancholy consolation (for such he deemed it) of attending the funeral of his son. He was accompanied by that son's most faithful and cherished friend, William Henry Brooke, the artist.\*

\* Mr. Brooke is still living; and although, from distance and the circumstances of life, it is most probable I shall never see him more, yet I cannot resist the desire I feel here to bear testimony to the high esteem and regard in which he was

When they arrived at the end of their sad journey, Stothard wrote to my father, but he could not summon resolution enough to write to me. The letter was short, calmly expressed, but full of deep feeling. He stated that the fatal blow had been received on the left temple, above the eye, and had left the marks of a violent death. It seemed to give him comfort, when he found that every respect had been paid to, and care taken of his son, both before and after his sad fate. Brooke, painful as it was, determined once more to look on the countenance of the friend who had been so dear to him. He did so. But on Stothard being asked if he wished to see his son before the coffin closed for ever on his remains, resolutely refused. "No," he said; "I wish to preserve an agreeable remembrance of him, as I last saw him in health and life, and not as he now lies. I would not wish so to recall him to my mind."

The last mournful duty over, Stothard and his friend returned to town: he came immediately to my father's. The recollection of that meeting is sacred to my heart. His humanity, his tenderness—the delicacy with which he forebore to touch on the least point that he feared would increase my affliction—would alone have been sufficient to endear him to me, had I never loved or venerated him before. Kindness and sympathy inspired all he did. On the birth of my child (one month after her father's death), as soon as I could see him, he came again. He looked on

held, not only by the son but by the father. Stothard considered that Brooke, as an artist, possessed great genius; his imagination was vivid, and his feeling strong. He lamented, that with such uncommon powers, Brooke could not devote himself more

entirely to the study of the higher branch of the art for which Nature had designed him. And whilst he thus praised the artist, he no less estimated the warmth of his heart, and his constant and affectionate friendship for his son Charles.



his little grand-daughter with great interest; she was a beautiful infant, and that gave him pleasure. He proposed to make a drawing of her for me, but unfortunately delayed his purpose, hoping that when she became a little older she would be more easily kept still for him to sketch her. Deeply did his kind heart regret the delay, when it pleased Almighty God to take her to Himself, after only a few hours' illness, at the age of seven months. Affliction thus followed affliction; but it was not all. Weakened in mind as well as body by such sudden and continued calamities, and from an unrestrained indulgence in tears after my beloved infant's death, so severe an inflammation in the eyes came on, that for a long period some apprehensions were entertained for my sight. Through all these several and bitter trials and afflictions, the kindness of my husband's father, like that of my own dear parents, was unwearied. It is repugnant to my feelings thus much to speak about myself; but it must, I think, be obvious to the reader, that unless I did so in this instance, it would be impossible to show fully the heart of Stothard, or to express my own grateful affection for his memory.

The loss of his son was, if possible, aggravated by the deprivation taking place at the very time the talents of poor Charles, as an antiquary and an artist, were beginning to be known and estimated as they deserved to be in the world of Art and Letters; and when the fairest prospects were opening upon him. The late Duke of Norfolk, and more especially his brother, the late Lord Molyneux Howard, were his friends and patrons. Had Charles lived, there is no question he would have been appointed (on a vacancy) as a herald in the College of Arms; and a vacancy did actually occur only six or seven weeks after his death.

Charles was an exquisite draftsman (he was historical draftsman to the Society of Antiquaries); and, when only twenty-two years old, painted a good historical picture still in my possession—The Death of Richard the Second. But he is principally known to the public as the author of that beautiful graphic work, The Monumental Effigies of Great Britain. Both the conception and plan of the work were truly original; the labour of it almost incredible—the few years he was spared, considered. He read, studied for it, with all diligence; travelled to almost all parts of the kingdom to make drawings for it; etched every plate himself which he published in it; and wrote a considerable portion of the letter-press which appeared before his death.\* The late Sir George Naylor, of the Heralds', repeatedly urged Charles to present the work *in person* to the Prince Regent (it was dedicated to his Royal Highness); but he said, "No; he would not then do so; he would wait till he was appointed to the College of Arms; and then he felt that he should be the first *Herald* who had ever presented such a national work to the Sovereign Prince."

Stothard had three other sons. Henry (next to Charles in birth) was brought up under Flaxman, as a sculptor. But though he remained with him for many years, his health, which had suffered from long and severe illness, rendered it impossible that he could sufficiently apply himself, so as to follow sculpture as a profession. For some time he taught drawing in the higher branch of the art, and possessed fine taste and accurate judgment, and a knowledge of the old masters that was creditable to the name he bore. In private life he was exceedingly beloved and respected.

\* My dear and lamented brother, Alfred J. Kempe, F.S.A., finished the letter-press on his friend Charles's decease.

He was of a feeling and most sympathizing disposition; the kindness of his heart was only equalled by the childlike simplicity of his nature. Indeed great was the worth of his general character. The paralytic affection, which had seized him early, at length prevented all exertion; and he died, universally esteemed and regretted, a member of the Charter House. His admission to that charity for decayed gentlemen was given to him by the good Queen Adelaide.

The next son, Alfred Joseph, is still living—a very fine artist in the branch he has chosen to pursue, that of a medallist. His works are remarkable for their bold relief, and the taste, fidelity, and beauty of their execution. It was this gentleman who produced the finest medal that has yet been seen of Sir Walter Scott, after the bust by Chantrey. Mr. Alfred Stothard was appointed Medallist to the King, George the Fourth, of whose head he executed a beautiful medal. Those of Canning, Byron, &c., were also from his hand.

The third son, Robert (who in person bears a marked resemblance to his father), possesses likewise a very great share of the family abilities for the Fine Arts. His drawings from subjects of antiquity are chaste, tasteful, and accurate—very much in the style of his late brother Charles, whom he succeeded as historical draftsman to the Society of Antiquaries; but he some time after, I believe, resigned the appointment.

Emma, Mr. Stothard's only daughter, possessed a mind cultivated by reading. She never pursued any branch of the Fine Arts except music; and she sang with great feeling. She was a favourite companion of her father, and for many years watched over him with affectionate care.

Stothard was a most true friend; always kind, gentle, and sincere. He was no courtier, but he disliked rough manners, and dogged opinions; and thought, with Johnson, "that honesty is not greater where elegance is less." To the young who were engaged in the study of Art he was good-natured and encouraging; ever aiding them with his advice (I speak it with a thankful recollection of his kindness in my own early pursuits); and of this we have instances in respect to Miss Johnes and Miss Georgiana Markham. Indeed, he became sincerely attached in friendship to his young pupils. Stothard thought that being able to draw, so opened the eyes to the full appreciation and enjoyment of the works both of Nature and Art, that he wished every educated person to acquire the power. He said, "Everybody who can learn to write, can learn to draw; to be a great artist is quite a different thing."

An instance of his exceeding good nature (though in relating it I am obliged to state a circumstance connected with myself and my lamented husband, his son Charles), may here be told: I should be wanting in gratitude to suppress it. Many years ago, on our return from Normandy and Brittany, I was advised by friends (Stothard among the number), to publish the letters which I had addressed to my beloved mother, during our journey, and which he often read over with her, almost as soon as they came to hand. Messrs. Longman and Rees undertook the publication, and it was arranged that we were to execute a series of drawings from the sketches of scenery, buildings, figures, &c., which we had made during our tour. They were all to be of a similar size, in order to suit a quarto volume. Those who copy from Nature know how difficult it is to give in the drawing the freedom and spirit of the

sketch. Whilst thus I was engaged with the subject, the Altar of St. Laurent, in the Church of Notre Dame D'Eu, and having made some progress with the architecture, I could not please myself in putting in the figures. With the utmost good nature, Stothard offered to undertake it, and did it with the same care as if working on one of his own drawings. But if I felt surprised by his condescending kindness in this instance, I was still more so when he desired that all our sketches of figures, Bretons, Norman peasants, &c., should be sent to him, and that he would group and make from them three drawings for my work: these he did in the most beautiful manner, preserving the character, and yet giving a grace to the very Bretons, though in themselves the most uncouth of all the Continental peasantry. At the time he did these kind acts, he was fully engaged by commissions for pictures, and designs for the booksellers; and for many years he had not made the smallest sketch under five guineas, and was in the receipt of a hundred, fifty, or eighty guineas, for oil pictures of a very moderate size and finish: the value of his time and talent, therefore, was great.

Although, as I have already noticed, to strangers, or to those who did not assimilate with him in feeling, he seemed reserved, yet all who knew him well, loved and esteemed him. I remember on first becoming acquainted with the late Mr. George Cooke, the celebrated engraver, and a truly amiable man, whilst speaking with admiration of Stothard's works, Mr. Cooke, who had a great deal of enthusiasm in his character, interrupted me, exclaiming—"Oh! do not talk about his works; though he's a wonderful painter; it is the man, the man that is so to be admired and revered."

Stothard's known strictness of principle gave great weight to his character. The following is an instance how strict he was in regard to himself even in a matter where his professional reputation was concerned. There is always a day fixed for sending pictures intended to be exhibited at the Royal Academy. In 1829, Stothard forgot the day, and sent none. So conscientious was he, that although, as an old academician, the librarian, and so far advanced in age, any indulgence he might require would have been granted to him—yet he would not ask permission to send in a picture after the proper time; saying he would not seek a favour which could not be extended to others.

Once a year there is a general meeting of the members of the Royal Academy. On one of these occasions, the weather being exceedingly cold, Sir Thomas Lawrence, the president, said, from the chair,—“Gentlemen, I beg you to put your hats on.” Stothard, then aged and infirm, had left his in the ante-room. Sir Thomas, hearing this, said, “Gentlemen, which of you will fetch Mr. Stothard's hat?” Instantly there was a rush of the members to show this little kind attention to their venerable brother; and the one who brought the hat to him, was Shee, afterwards Sir Martin, and president of the Royal Academy.

At length came to Stothard that time which, sooner or later, comes to all; that last scene which ends this “strange eventful history” of human life,—when the highest in honour, the most gifted in genius, even as the most obscure and least endowed among the sons of earth, must yield up his spirit to Him who gave it; all worldly things being then as nothing, save the use to which they have been applied. Then the hope of God's mercy, and the atonement of a blessed Redeemer, can alone sustain the trembling

and departing foul, to meet the righteous Judge, who is no respecter of persons: in whose sight he who has given but a cup of cold water in charity; who has achieved neither wealth nor fame, and has known nothing more than to walk humbly with his God; is more dear to Him than the highest and most gifted, wanting in such obedience.

That Stothard was a good man, and practised every moral virtue, is known to all who knew him well. What were his peculiar religious principles I know not, and therefore have said little on the subject. In an early part of his life, he was a constant and zealous attendant at a place of worship in Tottenham Court Road; probably Whitfield's, where Bacon the sculptor was so regularly seen. But whether, at a later period, Stothard had any peculiar views, such as Milton had adopted, about social worship, I know not; but it was remarked by his friends, and with regret, that he seldom or never attended public service. Yet whatever were his religious views, they must have been sincere, as he was sincerity itself; the purity and simplicity of his heart was apparent in all he said and in all he did. Let us hope, then, that feelings which bore such fruits, sprang from the only sure foundation of all good—Religion.

Greatly was Stothard tried at different periods of his life. He made his way, in youth, from comparative poverty, obscurity, and daily toil, in an uncongenial employment, to independence, honour, and distinction. And all this was achieved by severe study, and an industry that never flagged, and which eventually enabled him to bring to such perfection those extraordinary powers with which he was endowed.

The death of his eldest and promising son, Thomas, was a sad



trial to the heart of such a father ; that of his second son, Charles, was no less so, and for him he mourned doubly—for one dear to him in affection, and in whom he felt a pride for the honour which, by his talents and his virtues, he, at so early a period of his career, added to his name ; and it was no longer than the year following this heavy affliction, when his third son, Henry, was struck with that paralysis which ever after disabled him for any regular pursuit. The death of his old and valued friend, Flaxman, was also a great grief to him ; it followed close upon that of his wife, and made another blank in his existence. The health of Mrs. Stothard had long been shaken ; and, during the last three years before she died, she was confined entirely to her room. At length, in the spring of 1825, she was released by death from a melancholy state of suffering. She was an Anabaptist, as is already mentioned ; her remains were interred in the family vault of the burial-ground of Bunhill Fields. Stothard had fondly loved her ; and, although he possessed a very fine miniature of her, by Collings, and had more than once introduced her into his pictures, yet he wished to retain a recollection of what she was at the last. I have heard his son Alfred, say, that whilst suffering deeply for her loss, his father summoned up resolution enough to make a sketch of her after death. This union of strong feeling and as strong resolution, formed throughout life a remarkable trait in the character of Stothard. As a further instance, I may state, that on a friend calling to condole with him, he asked if he would like to see the deceased. The offer was accepted. Whilst looking on the body, to which death had restored, as it often does, the beauty which belonged to former years, Stothard was so struck with the serene expression of the countenance, that he exclaimed, as he gazed

on her whom he so loved, and who seemed as in a placid sleep, "It fills me with pleasurable feelings."

After the death of his son Charles, though he continued to apply himself to his wonted avocations, and produced many fine works, and showed to the world without, little of what passed within his own bosom, yet those who knew him well, could observe there was a change. His spirits were not as equal as they were wont to be; and without any decided illness, his health languished. Sometimes when any of his children came unexpectedly into the room where he was painting at the easel, and he did not instantly see them (and his deafness prevented his hearing their approach) he was often heard to sigh deeply, and to evince other tokens of affliction. On some occasion, one of his sons came thus unexpectedly into his study whilst in a very unusual manner he was giving vent to his feelings, fancying himself to be alone. His son expressed an anxious wish to alleviate if possible his father's grief; when Stothard acknowledged, with tears in his eyes, that no one knew what he suffered for the loss of his dear Charles.

Yet notwithstanding all this, and even after the death of his wife, from long habit—as well as from a sense of duty and a love of Art—he laboured on till the close of the autumn, 1833; when his increasing deafness, preventing his hearing the approach of anything, and rendering his crossing the streets of London dangerous, his family endeavoured to persuade him not to walk out alone. But apprehending nothing himself, and probably, like many men advanced in life, still wishing to feel independent of the watchful care of others, he would persist in doing so. At length he was knocked down by a carriage that came unexpectedly upon him. Although not seriously injured, yet the fall shook him, and he never recovered

from its effects; but he still persisted to walk out (followed by one of his sons, and often without his suspecting it), saying, that exercise was good for him, it was his medicine. Stothard evidently felt his powers declining and ceased to follow his usual pursuits; he felt that the hand would no longer obey the dictates of the mind. His son Alfred, relates a most distressing incident in connection with his poor father's last attempt to handle the pencil.

Alfred had been commissioned to execute a seal for the Central National School Society at Westminster. The subject he selected was from one of his father's designs for the poems of Rogers—from the Grecian story of the mother inducing the child to return from the verge of the precipice. This required some alteration, some adaptation to the subject proposed. Stothard made his remarks upon it, and advised a change of position in one of the hands of the principal figure. The better to explain his meaning, he made an effort to sketch what the alteration ought to be. But his son observed with extreme pain that he was unable to do so; the pencil dropt from the hand of him who had for years employed it with such inimitable grace; he never more resumed it.

He had seen both the young and the old go before him "the way of all flesh," and when he could no longer employ his active mind in the exercise of that "talent" committed to his trust, which he had turned to such good account, there is something very melancholy in our recollecting that he would frequently walk about the streets in order to amuse himself or divert his sadness; and, with a restlessness so opposite to his habits when in health, would often go sometimes thrice in one day to the house of his son Alfred, in whose children his affectionate heart seemed to take delight, when little else in this world afforded him any interest. Stothard was a

deep-thinking and feeling man, but his most deep feelings were seldom spoken, they were sacred to his own breast. I have no doubt that had the thoughts of that heart been read, they would have been found, in these hours of declining life, fixed on the "Eternal," with whom such a spirit as his must often have been in communion. All his children watched over him with the utmost attention in his decay. And his son Alfred (so often mentioned in these pages), much to his praise, latterly flighted his pursuits (though the father of eight children, dependent upon him,) in order that he might give up his time to the care of his beloved and revered parent.

Still he lived for some few months; and although his was not a case in which medicine could do anything (for what could supply strength to the almost exhausted energies of life?) yet was he constantly and most kindly attended by Mr. Joseph Henry Green, surgeon, and lecturer on anatomy to the Royal Academy. All that could tend to alleviate the last days of weakness in declining age was done for him. But the Law of Nature, neither genius, nor affection, nor all human care can contravene: Stothard's course was run; he had lived his appointed time; and, to use the emphatic language of Scripture, the hour approached in which he was to be "gathered to his fathers."

Towards the spring of 1834, he gradually became weaker. Even then there was no disease whatever, but a decay of the vital powers. At length he took to his bed, where he was confined about a fortnight. There was no apparent suffering, and he retained his intellects clear to the last moment; although for three or four days before he died he lost the faculty of speech. On the morning of the 27th of April, his son Alfred felt desirous to

know if he recognised those who were around him, and all his children were about his bed. For this purpose he held his father's hand within his own, and put several questions to him; and found by his expressive looks, and the warmth with which he returned the pressure, that his father retained a perfect consciousness. And on asking him if now, when all earthly aid was vain, he put his trust where alone it could be anchored with sure and certain hope, Stothard looked upward, and gave his son's hand the most earnest pressure in reply. It was the last; he almost immediately expired.

He was buried by the side of the wife he had loved so well, in the family vault in the same cemetery where his mother and his first-born son, Thomas, were interred. His eldest surviving son, the late Henry, acted as chief mourner; his other sons, Alfred and Robert, with a faithful old friend, Mr. Naylor, also attended the funeral. The Rev. Mr. Ruffel, the Rector of Shepperton, near Staines, performed the last solemn service of the Church of England over his remains.\* A stone erected to his memory marks the spot.

So lived and so died Thomas Stothard, for imagination the greatest painter which this or any other country ever produced. True it is that his own works are his monument; but for the sake of our national credit and gratitude, it is to be hoped that his country, for whose arts he has done such good service, and rendered to them such immortal honour, will not suffer him to rest without some memorial in one of our cathedrals. Westminster Abbey has already the statues of a Garrick and a Kemble—great illustrators of Shakspeare, surely a Siddons and a Stothard, who

\* The Rev. Mr. Ruffel, son of Stothard's old friend, the late Mr. Ruffel, R.A., once well known as a painter in crayons.

likewise so wonderfully illustrated our national poet, are not less worthy to be so honoured in the gathering-place of the noble, the gifted, and the good.\*

I now draw towards a close. Stothard, as we have seen, was a most kind and indulgent husband, and an affectionate father to all his children. He encouraged their several pursuits: and always said, with truth, that he endeavoured to judge of what they did as he would judge the works of an indifferent person, neither praising nor blaming them as his sons. Indeed, his commendation and his censure were generally given in moderation; they were the result of judgment unswayed by prejudice or by any private motive. Amongst his friends and acquaintances, he numbered several of the celebrated persons of his day. Many of these he survived; for those who live to his age know the sorrow of seeing most, often all, their early ties and connections drop around them. He used to speak of Northcote and Mrs. Lloyd† (formerly Miss Moser, and once very celebrated for her oil paintings of flowers) as the two oldest remaining Academicians, except himself, on the list. They both died before him. Though Stothard knew many of the eminent persons of his time, he never, I believe, formed so strict

\* Whilst on the subject of memorials for Stothard, I may here notice that some years ago, Mr. Alfred Stothard proposed to engrave a dye for a medal, with the head of his lamented father, from Chantrey's fine bust of him. At that time, however, he feared he should not meet with sufficient patronage (as few responded to the prospectus he put forth), to enable him to finish the work. Surely there can now be no difficulty on this point. The *Art-Union* of London publish every year a medal of

one of the most distinguished deceased artists. Flaxman, Chantrey, Hogarth, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and others, have already appeared. It is not probable that the Art-Union would omit Stothard; and they could not find a better artist to execute the medal than Stothard's son, Alfred, who has produced such fine heads of Byron, Walter Scott, Canning, &c.

† Mrs. Lloyd is now almost forgotten; but Stothard thought very highly of her merit as an artist.

an intimacy with any as he did with Flaxman and Mr. Rogers. The death of the former alone put a period to their friendship; and the poet's kindness and regard continued unchanging and unchanged to the last hour of the painter's life.

Of Flaxman's genius and worth, he ever spoke in the warmest terms of admiration. I have heard him say that in his opinion, no sculptor of modern times had ever so closely approached the great masters of antiquity. He possessed also the high merit of himself designing all the pieces that he executed with the chisel; he drew beautifully.\*

Flaxman's works, admirable as they are, will never be fully and universally estimated, till time shall have hallowed his genius. His conceptions of his subject, his personifications, were all of the highest order of poetical design. There was a sublimity of sentiment in his works, a simple and stern dignity, which, even amongst artists, required a similar intuitive feeling, beyond the mere knowledge of Art, fully to appreciate. Flaxman never sacrificed his sense of what belonged to his subject, to mere effect. His was like the severe school of classic antiquity; and his genius, like that of Greece in its pristine greatness, was of a character not formed for

\* The Hon. Sir Charles —, on his return from Italy, was made Chairman of a Committee of Taste, at Cambridge, at a time when they wanted the statue of some great man to adorn one of the public buildings or open courts of the University: it matters not which. Sir Charles was consulted as to what sculptor would best execute the work they had in view. He replied, there was but one man who could do it, and he was in Italy—Canova. Sir

Charles was requested to write to him on the subject; Canova replied, he was too busy to undertake it, and, moreover, that he was not the proper person for the task: England could supply the very sculptor fit for the work. Sir Charles was directed to write again, and inquire his name. Canova answered:—"I am sorry that in England you possess a Flaxman, and do not know it."



his own age alone, but to excite the admiration and fix the standard of taste in those ages which should succeed him in the sculpture of England. Flaxman was also a scholar; and the purity and elegance of his mind infused itself into all his works.

Nor was he as a man less excellent than as an artist; he was truly a single-hearted being—and the meekness with which he bore his faculties—his gentleness and affection to his family, his pupils, his workmen, and to the humblest servant in his house—rendered him like one of the patriarchs of old, as their common father, who presided over all for good, with the utmost simplicity of life and conversation. Stothard and Flaxman are now both dead. I knew them both, and to “know was to revere them;” for they were as much above the ordinary race of men, in the moral perfection of their nature, as they were raised above them by the achievements of their genius. Thus to pay homage to their memory, is not only a delightful task, but one which can raise no suspicion; for who flatters the inhabitants of the tomb? Flattery has a selfish aim, but posthumous praise is the offering of sincerity.

It is almost needless to state that the painter whose pencil had been so constantly employed in illustrating the greatest poets and writers of his own country, was a lover of poetry. Stothard had fine taste in literature; and, considering how constantly he was engaged in his professional pursuits, it is not a little surprising to find how much he had read; and how extensive was his knowledge on subjects of general reading. I shall never forget the last day we spent with him at his own house. He was then past seventy; but I never saw him in a more delightful frame of mind. His deafness, too, on that day, happened not to be so bad as it usually was; and he enjoyed and sustained conversation with extra-

ordinary vivacity. There was a kindness, a cheerfulness, blended with serenity, in his manner, which, at his date of life, it was delightful to witness. It was impossible to contemplate it without the sincerest feelings of reverence and affection; for no one had ever learned to grow old with a better grace than had Stothard.

He showed us the contents of several portfolios filled with his drawings, designs, views from nature, &c., related many little anecdotes concerning the circumstances under which they had been made, or of persons with whom he came in contact during their progress. His anecdotes were amusing, his observations original, and evinced a mind that thought and judged for itself; his remarks on books, and on the poets he had illustrated, were derived from no set rules, no current opinions; they were the result of his own feelings; and of that fine taste which in him was intuitive in the appreciation of whatever might be excellent. Whilst showing a sketch he had made of Mrs. Burns, the poet's wife, he took occasion, as he often did, to express his exceeding admiration of Burns; he used to call him the Poet of Nature.

Stothard was an excellent reader, but not at all in that style which passes current for good reading. It seemed to me (if I were asked to describe what was so peculiar and so striking in his delivery) that he read as if not reading at all; there was nothing in it artificial; not a tone was modulated by effort; it was the natural man throwing his mind into the subject that engaged him, and speaking the thoughts of another as if they were his own. In subjects of pathos all flowed from the heart; and his voice, being deep, and of great flexibility, was, when his feelings were touched, influenced by that emotion which produced a corresponding effect on his hearers.

Some persons, who did not know Stothard intimately, or had not studied him (for he was one of those men who are really a subject for *study* to an observant mind), considered him a most reserved character, and were afraid of him. He was unquestionably reserved, and very much so in any society where he did not feel himself quite at home; but it was not the reserve of design, far less of pride: it was merely from a want of sympathy in those about him who knew not how to touch the key-note of his mind; for Stothard was more of a ruminating than a reserved spirit; he was always thinking, not of himself, I am certain, but of some subject connected with his books and his designs. His mind was, strictly speaking, philosophical in its character; hence was he generally calm, notwithstanding the deep and strong nature of his feelings. I once heard his poor son Charles (who revered him, and thought no man on earth, as a man, a finer character than his father,) say, "It requires some very great occasion to make my father forget his equanimity; but when he does give way to his feelings, he is really awful."

In his manners, Stothard was indeed a gentleman. In saying this, I do not mean to imply that he had that precise knowledge of form and custom which is the result of an attentive observance of etiquette. Of such he took no heed; but he was that gentleman in his manners whom we at once feel to be such from the union of a cultivated mind, a kind and beneficent heart, and an unobtrusive modesty of disposition; one who wishes to give pleasure to others, but never to inflict pain. I can at this moment recall, as vividly as if he were now before my eyes, the quiet manner, the smile, and the good-humoured welcome with which he received you, as he would come from the painting to the drawing-room; and,

however short your call might be, he always endeavoured to make it agreeable by showing you something that he was about, or had finished, that he thought would interest you.

In his external appearance, he certainly neglected the graces ; for he was exceedingly careless in his dress, and his mind, absorbed in his pursuits, made him occasionally so lost, that he would do things that alone could be expected from persons well characterised as absent. He was once to dine, I believe, with Mr. Rogers, the poet, to meet Mrs. Barbauld, and, probably, Madame de Staël, during her visit to England. Stothard, on this occasion, had expressed his intention of making himself *smart* ! But, when he got to the door of Mr. Rogers, in St. James's Place, feeling his throat rather cold, and before the portal opened to his rap, he chanced to place his hand on his neck, when he found that he had forgotten to put on his cravat ! He made a hasty retreat before the door was opened, to return home for this very necessary part of his attire.

Charles used to relate an anecdote of his father's love of romance-reading ; by which he was so absorbed as sometimes to forget both time and place. It occurred whilst that son was a boy of fifteen. The youth had been engaged in Mrs. Radcliffe's powerful work of *The Italian*. Stothard took the book out of his son's hand just before the lad went to bed, to see what sort of romance had so bewitched him. The next day, Charles learnt that his father had been no less interested in it, and that he had sat up nearly all the night, till his candles were burnt out, and day dawned in upon him, ere he could close the volume. Stothard was a great lover of novels in general, and especially of historical romance. He illustrated very beautifully those of Sir Walter Scott, whose writings,

it is needless to say, he greatly admired. He likewise illustrated, many years ago, the novels of Richardson, with some of his most chaste and tasteful designs ; several of these, in regard to grace, are, indeed, matchless.

There are many portraits of this celebrated artist ; but that by



Pilgrim's Progress, engraved 1783. The Consolation. Christian having lost his Burthen at the sight of the Cross, Three Shining Ones appeared to him, and said, Thy sins are forgiven thee, and gave him a certificate to enter the Celestial City.

Harlowe is unquestionably the best, though it was never quite finished, for Stothard was to have given the last fitting to that early-lost painter on the very day, I believe, on which he died. In Harlowe's portrait the character is finely preserved, and brings before our eyes the original in the most vivid manner. It was

painted when Stothard was at that date of life when there is in the countenance all the strong expression which time renders more marked in persons eminently gifted with superior intellect; where we see the venerable character of age without the slightest touch of its imbecility. Chantrey's bust is also a fine likeness, and a most beautiful work of Art. I have never seen Bailey's, but I am assured it is excellent.

The genius of Stothard, though its peculiar distinctions have been occasionally noticed in these sketches of him, can alone find its adequate eulogium in his own works. In them it lives and speaks. It may be briefly said of the excellencies of this great painter, that his chief characteristics lay in the taste and feeling with which he treated his subject, the judgment that guided and governed both; and, above all, in the heights and depths of his boundless imagination—an imagination so wonderful in itself, so comprehensive in its exercise, that, as no other country has ever yet produced a painter who excelled him in this, the highest attribute of genius, so an age may pass away before we again, if ever, shall number among our most illustrious men his equal, as a second Stothard in the annals of our English Schools of Art.

Since writing the above, I chanced to find among my papers a few notes on the "sale of the drawings, studies, and pictures of the late Thomas Stothard, Esquire, R.A., by Messrs. Christie and Manson, King Street, St. James's, June 17th, 18th, and 19th, 1834."

These notes were written by my beloved and ever-lamented brother, Alfred John Kempe, who was well known as a most excellent antiquary and author; the latter principally on subjects of

historical interest and antiquity. He it was who finished so ably the biographical part of *The Monumental Effigies of Great Britain*. He was also an enthusiastic admirer of the great painter, and wrote the following notes (after attending the sale) for the *Gentleman's Magazine*. They form so appropriate a finish to these reminiscences,



Adam and Eve. From an original sketch in the possession of Mrs. Bray.

that I cannot resist the wish I feel here to insert them. My brother says:—

“I attended last week the sale of the exquisite works of the late venerable Stothard. I had ever appreciated his genius for the imitative art; but never until these days of sale, when his works were (so to speak) *simultaneously* displayed, did it burst upon me in the full blaze of its glory.

“Nothing in nature seems to have escaped him, and her influence guided his hand,—how lovely! how commanding!



Whether he sketched the vale studded with cottages and backed by cloud-capt mountains,—the roaring cataract or tufted woods,—the wild animals of the desert,—the flowers or herbs of the field,—or the varied combinations of the human form,—all was observation, truth, and power. Grace and ease was in every line. Such purity reigned in his female figures (especially in those clothed with flowing draperies) that on beholding them, we felt something of the idea of heaven brought before our eyes. He had the delicacy, and occasionally the grandeur of Rubens ; he embodied the humour of Chaucer, and the fairy creations of Shakespeare ; he shrunk not from the task of illustrating the works of that great master-mind, which

“exhausted worlds,  
And then imagined new ;”

his imagination compassed everything in real and poetic creation ; and he had the power to express on the canvas what he imagined. Respectable as the prices were which his pictures fetched at this sale (considering the state of the times), I felt how poor was the remuneration which money could afford for the highest gift of heaven,—natural genius. The whole proceeds of the sale of the sketches and paintings which had remained behind in this great man's study,—the result of a large portion of a life industriously spent in the exercise of his art,—was not more than 1900*l.*, for upwards of one hundred oil paintings, and more than a thousand sketches ! Well may the Psalmist say, ‘When the breath of man goeth forth, he shall turn again to his earth, and then all his thoughts perish.’

“But the goodness of God will not suffer gifts emanating from himself like these to perish everlastingly. It is, I trust, no pre-

sumptuous hope, to conceive that by His mercy in Christ Jesus, the spirit of this great painter, loosed from the infirmities and afflictions of the mortal stage, has put on immortality in those everlasting regions of purity and bliss, of which his imagination seemed to have given him a foretaste on earth."

Whilst occupied in the completion of this work, I have been favoured with an extract from a Lecture, recently delivered, on painting, by Mr. Leslie, R.A., in which that gentleman comments on the genius and works of Stothard. I feel much gratified by finding that in many of the remarks I have ventured to express in the foregoing pages, I am borne out by so high an authority as this most eminent painter. It is with great satisfaction I close with the following from his pen:—

"I should be glad to say something, if I could say it in a manner worthy of the subject, of the Art of Stothard.

"For more than half a century this great ornament of our school was engaged in illustrating not only the contemporary literature of his country, but the works of her best poets, from the time of Chaucer to his own; his employers, with the exception occasionally of the goldsmiths, being the bookfellers.\* By these he was engaged in every species of composition, from illustrations of Homer and Shakespeare, to designs for spelling-books and pocket-almanacks, fashions for the Ladies' Magazine, portraits of popular actors and actresses in character, as well as other subjects of the day, such as Balls at St. James's, the employments of the Royal

\* "Neglected as Stothard was by most of the professed patrons of Art in his day, he had one patron and sincere friend whose friendship was indeed an honour,—Mr. Rogers."

Family, the King going out with the Fox Hounds, &c. Numbers of his early designs are from novels and poems, the very names of which are now only preserved in his beautiful Art. By the goldsmiths he was employed in designing ornaments for plate, from the Wellington Shield to spoon-handles for George the Fourth.

“The species of his employment formed his style, which, resulting from the haste required by tradesmen, appeared slight and unsubstantial by the side of the works of artists who were enabled to give more time to their productions. His practice, also, limited the size of his works; and with people, therefore, who judge of pictures, in any degree, by the space they occupy on the walls of galleries, or the quantity of minute detail within that space, Stothard will rank as a painter of minor importance; while all who estimate Art by the soul that lives in it, will place him with the very few painters who have possessed imagination of the highest order, and have yet restrained themselves from over-stepping ‘the modesty of nature.’

“It must, however, be acknowledged that it is in his smallest pictures and drawings only that we feel there is nothing more to be desired;—when he repeated his subjects on a larger scale, which he sometimes did for the Exhibition, they have in general too much the character of magnified sketches. This may have made him say, near the close of his life, ‘I feel that I have not done what I might have done.’ Yet, perhaps, this is the feeling at last of every painter.

“It is scarcely possible but that among the thousands of Stothard’s productions, repetitions of himself should not occur; nor that he should not occasionally have adopted ideas suggested by

the antique or by the old masters. He not seldom reminds us of Raphael, often of Rubens, and sometimes of Watteau;—but he does so as one worthy to rank with them, and as they remind us of their predecessors. Yet his works will bear the deduction of every such instance of imitation, and of every repetition of himself, and we shall be surprised to see how much of the most beautiful original imagery will remain. His designs for the Novelist's Library remind us of no other painter. In these, all is direct from nature; and, as many of the novels in this collection were not very far in date from his own time, he gave the dresses of his day and the style of furniture.

“These charming works gained him first the admiration, and then the friendship of Flaxman; for on seeing some of them in a shop-window, the great sculptor determined to make the acquaintance of an artist with whose taste his own was so nearly allied.

“Stothard's illustrations of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, sixteen in number, belong to the highest order of Sacred Art. Here are images of holiness, of purity, and of childlike innocence, worthy of that beautiful poem. And they are as graceful to the eye as to the mind, the Art entirely aiding the sentiment. The one from among them which I should select as peculiarly an effusion of Stothard's own mind, for I can see in it no resemblance to any other painter, is that in which Christian is received by Discretion, Prudence, Piety, and Charity, into the Palace Beautiful.\*

“Another series of Stothard's designs, and which, though quite distinct from these, is evidently one in which he took great delight,

\* “The original pictures from the Pilgrim's Progress are in the collection of Lord Overstone, who also possesses the finest of the larger works of Stothard with which I am acquainted, the *Jacob's Dream*.”

is that from Robinson Crusoe. In looking at some of these one is almost more impressed with the solitude of the ship-wrecked man than in reading the book.

“His humour is as true and as delicate as that of Addison. His illustrations of the Spectator are therefore perfect; but the picture in which he has displayed the most of discrimination of character, is his Canterbury Pilgrims. The personages of Chaucer all seem to pass before our eyes as if they were shown to us by a painter cotemporary with the poet. If one has less of the real character than the rest, it is perhaps the Wife of Bath. She seems too young and too graceful for the merry dame who had buried five husbands. Yet he has well contrived to make it evident that her talk and laugh are loud, by their attracting the attention of those who are riding before and behind her, as well as of the persons closest to her.

“Like Hogarth, Stothard rarely had recourse to the model in painting. The truth is, that the minds of both were so completely filled with a store of imagery collected immediately from nature, and so vividly was this store preserved, that they could at will select and embody on canvas whatever was most appropriate to the subject in hand. The operation of painting is always an exercise of memory, for even with a model in the room, the transfer of what the painter sees is but a recollection, and the difference between those who can only paint with models at hand, and those who, like Hogarth and Stothard, and many, no doubt, among the old masters (of whom Michael Angelo must certainly have been one), can draw on the stores of their minds for their models—the difference between such is only that the latter class have the power of retaining images longer in their memories than others—a power

no doubt in a great degree to be acquired. Hogarth tells us that he fet himself to acquire it,—and he certainly did so to an extraordinary extent. He belonged to a very different class of painters from those who sit at home and consult engravings, or their copies of pictures, for precedents. His habits seem to have been anything but sedentary,—and I know Stothard's were not. When not engaged at his easel, his time was almost always spent in long walks through the streets and suburbs of London. In the summer he was fond of country excursions, and for one entire summer, as I have heard him say, he and one or two companions lived in a tent on the coast, I think, near Ramsgate, where they hired a boat and spent days in sailing; and from the mode in which this summer was passed, he probably found an advantage when illustrating *Robinson Crusoe*."







## APPENDIX.

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ALTHOUGH it would be impossible to give anything like a list of all Stothard's works; yet, in addition to those already mentioned, it may be as well to state where the principal collections of them may be found.

At Leigh Court (Mr. Miles's) is the original *Canterbury Pilgrimage*—the identical picture sold by Cromek to Hart Davis. It is in fine condition—full of character and colour. Mr. Boddington, of Upper Brook Street, had a repetition of it.

Mr. Windus, of Tottenham Green, has a large and very fine collection of Stothard's beautiful productions for the *Novelist's Magazine*, and his drawings for the edition of *Robinson Crusoe*, published by Stockdale, in 1790.\*

Mr. Rogers, the poet, possesses a copy in small, by Stothard, of the *Canterbury Pilgrimage*, and two scenes from *Boccaccio*, forming the panels of a cabinet. He has also *Peace*, *The Triumph of Amphitrite*, *A Fête Champêtre*, *Belinda* surrounded by Sylphs, *Scenes from the Children in the Wood*, and several small sketches of great elegance. Miss Rogers (the sister of the poet) possesses *The Vintage*, *The Banquet*, *Adam and Eve*, *The Farewell*, and several subjects from *Don Quixote* and the *Arabian Nights*.

For the late Mr. Champernown, of Dartington, Devon; Mr. Thomas Hope, Mr. Benson, of Doncaster; Archdeacon Markham, Mr. Samuel Boddington, and others, Stothard painted many fine pictures, still, I believe, in the possession of their families and relatives. Lord Overstone, and the Duke of Sutherland, have some of his finest works in their galleries. The latter, I am informed, has that gem of art, the *Phyllis and Brunette*. Wm. Sharpe, Esq., of Highbury, has also a valuable collection. Thos. Clark, Esq., of Highgate, has the *Characters of Shakespeare*.

Miss Denman, of Norton Street, not only has several of Stothard's oil paintings, selected by Flaxman, but also a very large collection of prints from his works.

Mr. Anderdon, of Lower Grosvenor Street, has several of this artist's beautiful paintings; among them, Sir Philip Sydney directing the Cup of Water to be given to the

\* Mr. Windus, with great liberality and kindness, allows his fine collection of drawings and paintings to be open every Tuesday to all who properly apply for admission.

Dying Soldier; and Milton Dictating to his Daughters a portion of the Paradise Lost. The first of these is fine in colour and composition, and has in it much of the depth and richness which characterised the Bower of Diana. Milton's daughters, for feminine grace and sentiment, is equal to any of his most admired works. In the attitude and countenance of the poet, there is much grandeur and strongly-marked character; the head elevated as if in accompaniment to his thoughts; and even the eyes, though dimmed with blindness, not devoid of expression.

## LIST OF STOTHARD'S WORKS EXHIBITED AT THE BRITISH INSTITUTION IN 1841.

| SUBJECT.   | PROPRIETOR.             | SUBJECT.                                     | PROPRIETOR.             |
|--|-------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| Adam and Eve . . . .                                     | H. A. J. MUNRO, ESQ.    | Canterbury Pilgrimage . . . .                | SAM. BODDINGTON, ESQ.   |
| Pastoral Subject . . . .                                 | C. SACKVILLE BALE, ESQ. | A Fête Champêtre . . . .                     | ROBERT VERNON, ESQ.     |
| A Sketch . . . .   | SAM. BODDINGTON, ESQ.   | Subject from the Spectator                   | LADY HOLLAND.           |
| Venus protecting Zeneas from the Spear of Diomed . . . . | H. A. J. MUNRO, ESQ.    | Cleopatra . . . .                            | SAM. BODDINGTON, ESQ.   |
| Comus, a Sketch . . . .                                  | SAM. BODDINGTON, ESQ.   | Vertumnus and Pomona . . . .                 | DITTO.                  |
| Subject from the Spectator                               | SAMUEL ROGERS, ESQ.     | The Bath of Diana . . . .                    | ROBERT VERNON, ESQ.     |
| The Tournament . . . .                                   | DITTO.                  | Subject from the Arabian Nights . . . .      | SIR GEORGE PHILIPS, BT. |
| A Sketch . . . .   | SAM. BODDINGTON, ESQ.   | The Judgment of Paris . . . .                | SAM. BODDINGTON, ESQ.   |
| Othello and Desdemona . . . .                            | DITTO.                  | Subject from Moore's Melodies . . . .        | DITTO.                  |
| The Brook . . . .  | WILLIAM SHARP, ESQ.     | Sketch from the Rape of the Lock . . . .     | DITTO.                  |
| Youth between Virtue and Pleasure . . . .                | SAM. BODDINGTON, ESQ.   | Sketch from the Arabian Nights . . . .       | DITTO.                  |
| Bacchanallians . . . .                                   | H. A. J. MUNRO, ESQ.    | Sketch from the Rape of the Lock . . . .     | DITTO.                  |
| The Scotch Fire Side [Halloween] . . . .                 | ROBERT VERNON, ESQ.     | The Banquet . . . .                          | MISS ROGERS.            |
| Family Portraits . . . .                                 | SAM. BODDINGTON, ESQ.   | Ruth and Boaz . . . .                        | SAM. BODDINGTON, ESQ.   |
| Sans Souci . . . .                                       | SIR GEORGE PHILIPS, BT. | The Repast . . . .                           | SAMUEL ROGERS, ESQ.     |
| Bacchanalian Dance . . . .                               | ROBERT VERNON, ESQ.     | Subject from Spenser's Faerie Queene . . . . | SAM. BODDINGTON, ESQ.   |
| Landscape, with Cattle at a Ford . . . .                 | SAM. BODDINGTON, ESQ.   | Ixion Embracing the false Juno . . . .       | DITTO.                  |
| Tam O'Shanter—And Woe! Tam saw an unco sight . . . .     | DITTO.                  | Victory . . . .                              | SAMUEL ROGERS, ESQ.     |
| Young's Night Thoughts; Night 1st, l. 44 . . . .         | DITTO.                  | Amphitrite . . . .                           | DITTO.                  |
| Sketch from the Rape of the Lock . . . .                 | DITTO.                  | The Waterfall at Hafod . . . .               | SAM. BODDINGTON, ESQ.   |
| Ditto . . . .  | DITTO.                  | Adam and Eve . . . .                         | MISS ROGERS.            |
| Ditto . . . .  | DITTO.                  | Cleopatra . . . .                            | SAM. BODDINGTON, ESQ.   |
| Young's Night Thoughts; Night 1st, l. 135 . . . .        | DITTO.                  | The Triumph of Peace . . . .                 | DITTO.                  |
| Sketch of the Staircase at Burleigh . . . .              | DITTO.                  | Cottagers . . . .                            | DITTO.                  |
| Subject from Don Quixote . . . .                         | MISS ROGERS.            | Subject from the Arabian Nights . . . .      | DITTO.                  |
| Diana Sleeping . . . .                                   | SAM. BODDINGTON, ESQ.   | Cottagers . . . .                            | DITTO.                  |
| Subject from Don Quixote . . . .                         | SAM. BODDINGTON, ESQ.   | Sancho and the Duchess . . . .               | SIR JOHN SWINBURNE, BT. |
| The Shakespeare Characters . . . .                       | SAM. BODDINGTON, ESQ.   | War . . . .                                  | ROBERT VERNON, ESQ.     |
| The Elements . . . .                                     | ROBERT VERNON, ESQ.     | The Dance . . . .                            | DITTO.                  |
| The Dance . . . .  | SIR JOHN SWINBURNE, BT. | Subjects from the Arabian Nights . . . .     | MISS ROGERS.            |
| Peace . . . .  | SAMUEL ROGERS, ESQ.     | Subject from Burns . . . .                   | SAMUEL ROGERS, ESQ.     |
| Subject from Don Quixote . . . .                         | MISS ROGERS.            | The Farewell . . . .                         | MISS ROGERS.            |
| The Vintage . . . .                                      | DITTO.                  | Amphitrite, a Sketch . . . .                 | THO. BODDINGTON, ESQ.   |
| Subject from Don Quixote . . . .                         | DITTO.                  | The Tournament . . . .                       | SAM. BODDINGTON, ESQ.   |
|  |                         | The Dance . . . .                            | ROBERT VERNON, ESQ.     |
|  |                         | Vertumnus and Pomona . . . .                 | H. A. J. MUNRO, ESQ.    |
|  |                         | Venus Reposing . . . .                       | DITTO.                  |

Mr. Chambers, of Castle Street, Leicester Square; Henry Vaughan, Esq., Cumberland Terrace; Mr. Farrer (a picture dealer), of Alfred Road, Regent's Park; Mr. White, of Maddox Street, Regent's Street, a printfeller; all possess valuable works by the same hand. Mr. Hawkins, of Bignor Park, has a fine collection of prints after

Stothard. Mrs. Black, the sister of Cromek, had, perhaps still has, twelve or fifteen small subjects on panel, beautifully coloured and highly characteristic of his pencil. Mr. John Martin, of Woburn, has *The Rival Beauties*, from the *Spectator*, in his best manner. The valuable collection of James Heath, the engraver, was dispersed after his death, so that it is impossible to say who are now the possessors of some most precious works.

The late Mr. Du Roveray told, I believe, the principal part of his collection of drawings to Mr. Windus, some years ago.

A picture of an unpromising class was that of the Presentation of the Colours in the Artillery Ground to the Bank of England Volunteers. But the genius of Stothard always triumphed over difficulties, or want of attraction in every subject that came under his pencil. He made a good picture of this; and it is still preserved in the Treasurer's Office at the Bank of England.

His Bath of Diana is now in the Vernon Gallery.

His Bower of Diana, where the goddess lies sleeping beneath a crimson curtain, a master-piece in his art, more especially for depth and richness of colour, and the glowing sunset glittering between the distant trees.\*

The following are the names of the principal engravers employed on Stothard's works: Schiavonetti, Bartolozzi, Raimbach, Sharp, Medland, Parker, James Heath, Cromek, George Cooke, William Cooke, Worthington, Finden, and Luke Clennell. Heath and Clennell seem to have done his works the greatest justice. He frequently touched on the proofs of the plates whilst they were in progress; and this, I believe, was one, if not the principal reason, why some of the prints after Stothard give much of that grace which was so peculiarly his own.

Those who wish to form an idea of the vast extent and varied powers which characterised the genius of Stothard, cannot do better than repair to the print-room of the British Museum, where nearly *four thousand* engravings after his works are already collected.

Since the above was written, Mr. Alfred Stothard has informed me that his father was among the very first who drew on stone. He instances a subject on that material called *The Bitten Apple*, a female figure on the outside a cottage low door, with a child peeping over the latter: a print very scarce; he says it looks like a pen and ink drawing, and is about 15 inches in height. Mr. A. Stothard adds, that Mr. Balmanno is still living, in America; and he believes is yet in possession of the *perfect set of proofs* of his father's designs for the *Novelist's Magazine*—a collection of almost inestimable value. It is to be hoped that the British Museum may one day be enabled to purchase them for the volumes of Stothard's works.

\* I have seen a receipt signed by Stothard, and dated April 11, 1793, acknowledging 30 guineas received of Mr. Robinson, "for two paintings of *Pericles*."

Anger of lead } ground dry together afterwards spread with castor oil

Mastic-gum  
Linenseed oil

Water as much as it  
will take



1 White

2 Ochre

3 Vermilion

4 Lt Red ochre

5 Lake with very  
little Indian  
red

6 Dark Ochre

7 Bone brown

8 Very Black

9 Raw Terra or Umber

10 Antwerp Blue

LIST OF STOTHARD'S WORKS, EXHIBITED AT THE ROYAL ACADEMY:—

- 1778 A Holy Family.\*
- 1779 Banditti.
- 1780 Retreat of the Greeks, with the body of Patroclus.  
A Shepherd, from Sterne.  
The Protestant Association.
- 1781 Four Designs in Water-colours for the Poetical and Novelist's Magazines.†
- 1782 Three Drawings to be engraved for the Poetical Magazine.
- 1785 Death of Sir Philip Sydney.
- 1786 Britomart, from Spenser's Faerie Queene, 4th book, canto i., 13th verse.
- 1791 Marriage of Henry the Fifth with Catherine of France.  
Friars, a Conversation.  
Richard the First's Return from Palestine.  
Richard the First's Treatment of Isaac, Prince of Cyprus (now in the possession of Mr. White, of Maddox Street).
- 1792 A Confirmation (in the possession of the Rev. W. Russell).
- 1793 Six Paintings from Telemachus.  
The Dryads finding Narcissus.
- 1794 Matthew de Johnson defeating the Earl of Douglas, and taking his brother, the Earl of Ormond, prisoner.  
Keppel, Earl of Albemarle, at the siege of Lisle, where his horse was shot under him.  
The Interview between Henry the Eighth and Charles the Fifth.
- 1796 A Victory.
- 1797 From the Pilgrim's Progress.  
Venus and Adonis.  
Christiana and her Children.

\* He was then living "at Mr. Somner's, Bethnal Green." In the previous year (1777) at the Exhibition of the Royal Incorporated Society of Artists of Great Britain, "M. James Stothard, at Mr. Sumner's, near the Blind Beggar, Bethnal Green," exhibited:

A South View of Snowdon Peak, in Carnarvonshire.  
A View of Carnarvon Castle, with part of the Isle of Anglesey.  
A Battle, from the 4th Book of Homer's Iliad.

"M. James" is doubtless a misprint for "Thomas."

† The following is an extract from the cover of one of the old numbers of the Novelist's Magazine; and is here given merely as a curious specimen of the puffing of the day:—

"It is foreign to our plan to take any sort of notice of letters received by the publishers, and we do not mean to repeat it; but, in justice to that most astonishing artist, the truly ingenious Mr. Stothard, we cannot suppress the happiness we feel from the numerous inquiries in his favour, which have been transmitted to us, by several of the greatest connoisseurs in the kingdom; all uniformly declaring him the first genius of the age in this department, and earnestly recommending us to procure as many drawings as possible from the animating pencil of so distinguished and aspiring an artist."

- 1798 A Lion Hunt.  
 Tempest, *vide* Robinson's Shakespeare.  
 A Scene in the second part of Henry the Fourth.
- 1799 The two Senior Scholars of the Grammar School, in the Hall of Christ's Hospital, delivering their Anniversary Orations on St. Matthew's Day, before the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of London, and the Governors of the City Hospital.
- 1801 The Fatal Sisters, from the second volume of Mr. Bowles's Poems.  
 "Posting through the battle red,  
 And singling fast the destin'd dead,  
 See the fatal sisters hie."
- 1803 Phillis and Brunette, or the Rival Beauties; from the Spectator, No. 80.  
 Roger de Coverley and the Gipsies.  
 The Spectator's Club.
- 1805 A Design for part of the Great Staircase, Burleigh.
- 1806 Belinda, *vide* Rape of the Lock.
- 1808 Pope's Essay on Man.  
 "Behold the child by Nature's kindly law," &c.  
 Robinson Crusoe's Long Boat.
- 1809 Peace (now in the Vernon Gallery).
- 1810 Cleopatra dissolving the Pearl; the original design for a Painting executed on the Great Staircase at Burleigh.  
 The Interruption of the Marriage Ceremony by Fitzallen; from Mr. Linley's novel Ralph Reybridge.  
 Death of Sefton in the Jungle; from the same.
- 1811 Leaving Home; from Goldsmith's Deserted Village.  
 Landscape, with Cattle at a Ford.  
 The Scene of Boccaccio's Tales.
- 1812 Portraits of the Children of S. Boddington, Esq.  
 Judgment of Paris.  
 Amphitrite.  
 Canace with the Enchanted Ring, *vide* Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.
- 1813 Shakespeare—the characters from the comedy of Twelfth Night; the comic characters from the first and second parts of Henry the Fourth, As You Like It, and the Tempest, and from the tragedies of King Lear, Hamlet, and Macbeth.
- 1814 Calypso with her Nymphs caressing Cupid.  
 Euphrosyne.
- 1815 The Crucifixion.
- 1816 Tam O'Shanter.  
 From the ballad of the Children in the Wood—the Uncle delivering up the Children to the ruffians. (Now in the possession of C. W. Dilke, Esq.)  
 Adam and Eve in Paradise.  
 Adam and Eve out of Paradise.

- 1816 The Flower and the Leaf, *vide* Chaucer.  
John Preaching in the Wilderness.  
Diana and her Nymphs Bathing.
- 1817 "Flow gently, sweet Afton."—Burns. (Mrs. Black, formerly Miss Cromek,  
had the original of this.)  
The Triumph of Britannia.  
Sans Souci.  
The Bolero.
- 1818 Fête Champêtre.
- 1819 An Interior in 1658.  
The First Part of the Decameron.  
The Second Part of the Decameron.
- 1820 Sancho Panza with the Duchess.  
The Mill, *vide* Decameron.  
The Garden, *vide* Decameron.  
The Supper by the Fountain, Decameron.  
Pampiena elected Queen, and receiving the Crown of Laurel from Philomena,  
*vide* Decameron.  
The Meadow, *vide* Decameron.  
Amphitrite.
- 1821 The Vintage.  
Sancho Panza relates to Don Quixote the reception and conversation he had  
with Dulcinea.  
Shakespeare's Characters—Falstaff, As You Like It, Tempest, King Lear, and  
Macbeth. (This picture was painted twice in different sizes.)
- 1822 A Sleeping Bacchante.  
Joseph telling his Dream to his Father.
- 1823 The Muse Erato (one of the subjects painted for the Advocates' Library,  
Edinburgh).
- 1824 Venus with Cupid attended by the Graces.
- 1825 Titania.
- 1826 Fête Champêtre. (A different composition from the picture exhibited in 1818.)
- 1827 The Vision on May-Day on Loch Lean, from the Legend of O'Donoghue.
- 1828 May-Morning.  
Frame containing Four Designs from Monstrelet.  
Arabian Nights.  
From the Tales of my Landlord.
- 1830 The Bower of Diana.  
The Frith of Clyde, with the Isle of Arran and the Town of Ayr in the  
distance.
- 1832 Usurpation of Birds' Nests by Cupids.
- 1834 Death of Nelson.



## LIST OF THE PICTURES IN OIL COLOUR IN THE POSSESSION OF STOTHARD AT HIS DECEASE, SOLD AT CHRISTIE'S IN JUNE, 1834.\*

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| 10      | 0  | 0 | A View in Scotland, with a Wheat-Field . . . . .  | S. ROGERS.  |
| 3       | 6  | 0 | Waterfall, with Figures . . . . .   | THANE.  |
| 3       | 5  | 0 | A Landscape, with Cattle . . . . .  | BELL.   |
| 2       | 0  | 0 | George the Third, designed for a Transparency . . . . .   | CORBOLD.  |
| 0       | 18 | 0 | Subject from Ossian . . . . .   | BELL.   |
| 3       | 3  | 0 | Triumph of Thetis . . . . .   | { KEMPE (now in the possession of the Rev. E. A. BRAY). |
| 3       | 5  | 0 | Boaz and Ruth; a sketch; and the Flight into Egypt . . . . .  | MOLTENO.  |
| 10      | 10 | 0 | A part of the Canterbury Pilgrimage . . . . .   | { NORTON.   |
| 3       | 5  | 0 | The Diana Sleeping . . . . .  | MISS DENMAN.  |
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| 2       | 12 | 0 | Murder of Thomas à Becket . . . . .   |   |
| 1       | 1  | 0 | Design for Burleigh, and Sketch of the House . . . . .  | { THANE.  |
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| 9       | 9  | 0 | Knights Armed for the Tournament . . . . .  |   |
| 16      | 16 | 0 | Confirmation . . . . .  | { HEATH (now in the possession of the Rev. W. RUSSELL). |
| 22      | 1  | 0 | The Bolero . . . . .  | VERNON.   |
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| 6       | 16 | 6 | { The Barber's Brother; Arabian Nights; and a Youth between Virtue and Vice . . . . .               | { THANE.  |
| 2       | 5  | 0 | { A Sketch from Boccaccio's Decameron; and two Female Figures . . . . .                             |   |
| 3       | 5  | 0 | { Sir Philip Sydney and the Dying Soldier; and Joseph discovering himself to His Brothers . . . . . | { YATES.  |
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| 3       | 4  | 0 | A pair: scenes from Novels (ovals) . . . . .  | FULLER.   |
| 3       | 3  | 0 | From Rasselas . . . . .   | No Name.  |
| 6       | 16 | 6 | Repose of the Holy Family with Angels . . . . .   | NUSSY.  |

\* Above one thousand of Stothard's original drawings were sold at this sale: it is impossible to name them in detail.

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This sale was extended over three days, and from inexperience and other untoward circumstances, was not well managed by the family of Stothard. It is much to be regretted on their account; as they suffered by it. Many persons who would have gladly attended and purchased did not know anything about it till it was over. Though in London at the time, and so long connected with the venerable painter, and feeling an interest in all that concerned him or his works, I only heard of it the night before it took place. The pictures were sold, in many instances, deplorably low in price. Many of them bought thus *cheaply*, have since been re-sold for 50*l.*, 100*l.*, and 200*l.* each. Mr. Alfred Stothard says that his father's exquisitely beautiful picture of *Jacob's Dream* was bought at a sale for 18*l.*, and sold some time after to Jones Loyd, Esq., now Lord Overstone, for 300*l.*

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\*.\* The original drawing by Stothard for Chantrey's Sleeping Children, engraved at p. 184, belongs to Peter Cunningham, Esq. The engraving is a fac-simile of the original, both in size and feeling.



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most impassioned scenes in 'De Foix,' 'De Pomeroy,' or 'The Talba,' can have traced such simple, such heart-touching scenes in ordinary life, as we find in the stories of 'The Protestant'—those that compose 'Trials of the Heart,' such as 'The Little Doctor,' 'Vicissitudes,' and 'The Adopted?' When we find works, so opposite in their character, the productions of one mind, endowed with a versatility of genius as wonderful as it is rare, we feel desirous to learn, if possible, by what means such powers have been cultivated and brought into action; and, in the present instance, we derive considerable light, not only from Mrs. Bray's General Preface (prefixed to the first volume of the present series), but also from some information we have received from an authentic source, and which, we feel, will add much to the interest of the present article with the reader."—*Oxford and Cambridge Review*.

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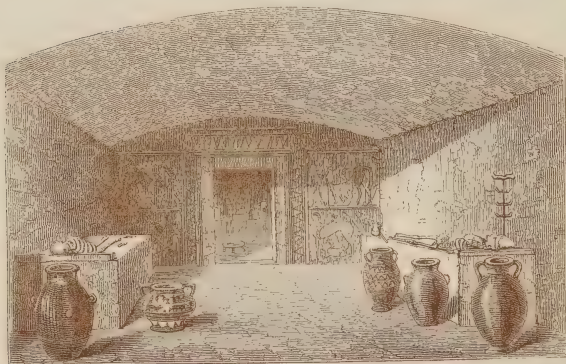
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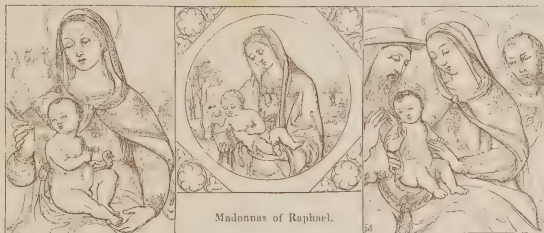
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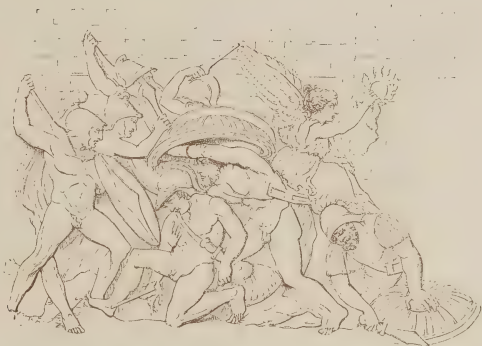
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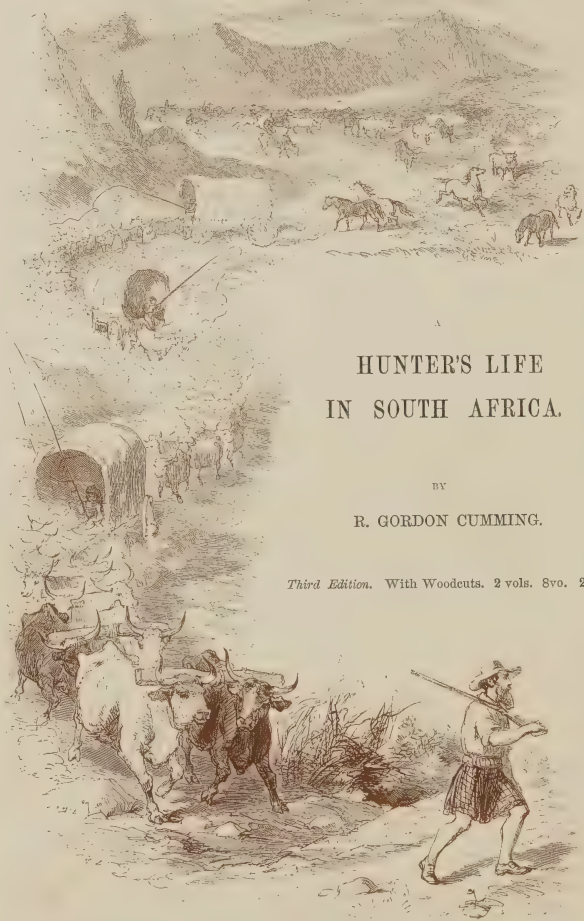
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